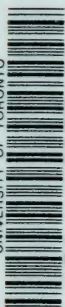



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VOICES FROM THE ORIENT;

OR,

THE TESTIMONY OF THE MONUMENTS,

OF THE

RECENT HISTORICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL DISCOVERIES, AND OF THE
CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS OF THE PEOPLE IN THE ORIENT,
TO THE VERACITY OF THE SACRED RECORD.

BY THE

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Ex-Examiner in Oriental Languages and Literature in the University of Toronto.

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Ἐποίησέ τε ἐξ ἑνὸς αἵματος πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ πᾶν τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γῆς,
ὁρίσας προτεταγμένους καιροὺς, καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν — Acts xvii. 26.

TORONTO:

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, 5 JORDAN STREET.

1884.

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TO

DANIEL WILSON, ESQ., LL.D.,
PRESIDENT OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, TORONTO,

AS A TOKEN OF ESTEEM FOR HIM AS A MAN, AND AS A MARK OF
APPRECIATION OF HIS EMINENT AND EXTENSIVE SCHOLARSHIP.

THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THERE is no pretence in this volume to offer to the Canadian public any new discoveries by the author in the lands of the Orient. It may be asked, then, why write anything more upon a subject which has been investigated and discussed by many learned men? My answer is twofold. Though the mine has been well wrought, and the rich veins of ore have given up their treasures, there is yet ample to reward any diligent workman. In the customs, language and life of the people, there is much that a keen observer may gather of interest and profit to the reader, and which may add a little to the light that has been focussed on the pages of Scripture, whereby our faith in the Word of God may be strengthened. Besides, as a Canadian, I have viewed the monuments, the country, and the people from the standpoint of a Canadian; and as many of the places and subjects with which this volume deals have not been discussed by any Canadian, or at least not presented to the public in permanent form, as far as I am aware, I feel that I am walking upon new ground, or ground that has not been beaten hard by the feet of a long line of authors.

Having spent much labour and considerable time in visiting scenes and objects beyond the usual route of travel, and having devoted years to the study of the monuments of the ancient Egyptian people, and the famous subjects of controversy, in Arabia and Palestine, I issue this volume with the hope that it may afford some pleasure and information to the reader.

The opinions and conclusions of others in regard to many questions yet *sub judice* I have carefully examined, but have reached my own conclusions from personal investigation.

Christianity is so essential to the world's progress in wealth, in peace, and in righteousness, that the land of its birth, of its struggles and its triumphs, is of interest to all who desire the development of the race in all that is noble and godlike. Daily in Palestine I saw evidences—in the language of the people, in their habits, their methods of eating, drinking, travelling, working, and praying—that the writers of the Sacred Record had the most intimate and correct knowledge of the land and its inhabitants. Their descriptions harmonize with the state of things to this day in the remote parts of the country that have not been influenced by European manners. Their knowledge of the topography of the country has been verified by all recent explorations. This is admitted by the opponents of Scripture, who, however, refuse to accept them as trustworthy narrators when they speak of the signs and wonders and mighty deeds of Christ. Let any man of unbiassed mind, however, ride through Egypt, Arabia and Palestine with the Bible in his hand, and his testimony will be that the writers of that Book wrote the words of truth. Renan, the gay and superficial Frenchman who can with ease ignore the facts recorded by the Evangelists, or pervert them when they do not suit his materialistic mould, is forced to bear testimony, all the stronger that it comes from a foe, to the truth of the Evangelists. He says: "The striking agreement between the descriptions of the New Testament and the places which lay around me; the wonderful harmony between the ideal portrait of the gospels and the landscape which served as its frame—all these things were a kind of revelation to me. I seemed to have a fifth Gospel before me mutilated and torn, but still legible; and from that hour, under the guidance of Matthew and Mark, I saw, instead of that abstracted being whose existence one can scarce help questioning, a genuine but wondrously beautiful human figure full of life and motion.'

Whoever walketh over the Temple Area or under it will find that the words of Christ have been fulfilled to the uttermost : “ One stone shall not be left standing on another.” Jerusalem is trodden down under the feet of the Gentiles, the Jews are treated with indignity by Mahomedan and Greek. They are aliens in their own land, and strangers in that ancient capital of Israel. The curse of God rests on the land, and ignorance and bigotry are seen everywhere. Among the ruins of the famous towns that lined the shores of the sea of Galilee, whose very sites are matters of dispute among scholars, the complete fulfilments of Christ's prophecy of doom is seen in terrible reality. Fallen columns, and entablatures of old synagogues, houses of huge, rough stones razed to their foundations, heaps of rubbish, mounds of ruins rising up among thistles and rank weeds, universal desolation, are witnesses from the graves of the centuries whose testimony cannot be shaken.

I feel thankful to God for His merciful protection during my many wanderings in the far East. The spirit that finally culminated in a declaration of war in 1882 against Britain, and an appeal to arms was felt every day, in the bazaars, mosques, and other public places. Rumours of war were heard everywhere. The Mahomedans concealed their fierce hatred and haughty insolence by the thinnest veil, and only the fear of death restrained them from murder. Then it needed the utmost caution to visit Egypt in safety.

To my congregation I feel grateful for their liberality, and also to a few intimate friends, by whose aid I have been enabled to realize one of my life desires.

The following resolution was moved, at a special meeting of the congregation, by John M. Gill, Esq., and carried unanimously by a standing vote :—

“ That whereas the Rev. Mr. Burnfield has expressed a desire to visit Palestine and other places in the Old World ; and whereas such a visit will be of great benefit to him, and through him to this congregation and

the Church at large ; therefore be it resolved that while we regret the prospect of his absence, we cordially grant him leave of absence."

A few of the views in this volume are original, the others have been obtained at considerable labour and expense. I hereby express my great indebtedness to Professor Hirschfelder, the learned lecturer on Oriental Languages and Literature in University College, Toronto, for his valuable assistance in reviewing the most of the manuscript. My thanks are also due to the Rev. James Cleland, a man of ripe and extensive scholarship, for his services.

My purpose in sending forth this volume to the Canadian public will have been fully realized if I have added in the least degree to the knowledge or interest of the reader in the old and famous countries of the Orient, and if I have been the means of deepening faith in Him, who is the life and light of the world.

I trust that the reader will find, during the journey through Greece, Egypt, Arabia, Palestine, and Syria in this volume, the same pleasure and inspiration which I experienced, and that the hours spent in perusal of this volume will not be in vain.

GEORGE BURNFIELD.

BROCKVILLE, Sept. 5th, 1884.

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PART I.

ITALY, GREECE, EGYPT, ARABIA.

CHAPTER I.

ROME.

“In the second century of the Christian Era, the Empire of Rome comprehended the fairest portion of the earth and the most civilized part of mankind.”—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.



AS I rode from Pisa, in December, the fields on each side of the railway were green with grain and vegetables. Vineyards extended for miles. The vines were festooned from tree to tree in long rows. In going south I had a fine view of the sea on the right. Its waters, bathed in the bright sunlight, contrasted finely with the green fields and white farm houses along the shore. At the railway stations I became familiar with two classes of Italians, the peasants, who were clad in rough home-made material, who wore broad-brimmed hats and heavy brogues; and under the arm they carried bread and vegetables tied up in a coloured handkerchief, and in their hands glass bottles with long slender necks. The bottles, which contained wine, were covered with matted grass to prevent breaking. These men were travelling to Genoa, Spezzia, or Rome, to sell the produce of their gardens or vineyards. The other class is numerous in Italy. The typical member of it wears a few rings on his fingers; glittering gems

of a cheap quality adorn his bosom. He carries always a slender cane, and is an inveterate smoker and talker. If one asks his business, the universal answer is, "I am in commerce." It was dark long before I reached Rome. From the car window I peered into the darkness to see the lights of that famous city. At first they appeared far in the distance, one, two, three, then the number increased until I saw the sky illuminated above the city, by the lights reflecting against the black clouds. The train soon passed inside the walls, and if it had been daylight, on the left would have been seen Porta Maggiore, and near it the tomb of Eurysaces, the baker, on which was depicted the whole process of baking in the early days of Rome. Farther on were ruins of temples and masses of the old walls, of kingly times. But the train stopped, and the guard shouted, "Roma, Roma," and I was in the once renowned city of the great Cæsars—the city whose armies subdued the world, and whose name is set in eternal glory by her famous statesmen, patriots, poets and orators. I had been recommended to a lodging place on Via Sistina, on the Pincian Hill, overlooking the Piazza D'Espagna. The house was kept by a Scotch lady who has spent many years in Italy. She informed me there was only one room vacant, on the fourth storey, and asked if that would suit me. A few flights of stairs, more or less, was a matter of indifference to me, I responded. There was another obstacle in the way, however. One of the lodgers of the house had to pass through this room in order to reach his own; it would be necessary therefore to consult this gentleman. He was a red-faced man, of very rapid speech, which under any excitement ran into hopeless stammering. After a few minutes' conversation he concluded there could be no danger to him, if I took possession of the said room, and for my part I was satisfied. The porter—a stout, burly man, who occupied a room at one side of the entrance—

took my luggage on his shoulder and began to ascend, and I followed. As the longest roads have an end, so had this. It terminated in a small room, comfortably but scantily furnished. The porter deposited his load with a sigh of relief. At the rear of this room was a projecting balcony from which I could look down on the city and see St. Peter's, the Pantheon, and, by aid of a glass, the famous places in the Campagna. Although my room was high up I congratulated myself that I was all the nearer the pure blue sky, and also had a magnificent view of a large part of the city. I retired, intending to devote the following day to hard work among the famed objects of ancient Rome. I fell asleep, but was awakened by a strange marching backward and forward in the room occupied by the red-faced man. I listened, uncertain whether to shout, or ring the bell for a servant. The marching was varied by a rapid flinging of boots or books against the door and walls. I concluded if my neighbour was attacked by some midnight assassin, I was, as a man and a Christian, bound to go to his aid. I shouted, "Hallo, what is wrong?" The only response was the missiles flew faster, and with greater force. "Hallo, my friend," I again shouted. Then all was silence. Now I thought this scene is ended, and hoped there would be no more to follow. Perhaps half an hour passed, when I again became conscious of a hurried marching, and rapid mutterings. This time my neighbour had started on a mathematical tack: "four and one are eight, two and three are ten, five and one are twenty, which nobody can deny." I grew alarmed as to the sanity of my neighbour, and quietly piled up my baggage and all the chairs and movable objects against the door of his room, which opened into mine. Gradually the marching and mental arithmetic ceased, and I became unconscious of all earthly things. In the morning I took down the barricade from the door, and stood ready to defend myself if an assault were made, but to my astonishment

he appeared sane and cheerful. On enquiry, I learned that he became furious when his views on religion were opposed, and, on the evening in question, some one had challenged the correctness of his religious opinions.

Among the company at the house of this most intelligent and kind hostess on Via Sistina were persons from the ends of the earth, some seeking health, some mere pleasure, while others had found their way to the old capital of the Roman Empire for knowledge. In company with two of the guests, Mr. Anderson and his wife, I made a visit to the traditional site of St. Paul's house in which he lived while in Rome. There are three places that claim this honour, but the one we visited—house number two in Via Degli Strengari—has the strongest probability in its favour. The late Dr. Philip, who spent many years in Rome, and was an indefatigable investigator, was of opinion that this was the true locality. The lower parts of the building are evidently very old, while the upper part is modern. We went up a flight of stone steps and knocked at the rickety door. Some one invited us to enter. In this room were three women, and eight or ten children. The inmates and everything in the room seemed to have eschewed water as they would a plague. We asked to be shown into the foundations of the house, but were informed the entrance was from the next door. The next door on one side was a shop in which charcoal was sold. The owner evidently thought we had little to do, in seeking admission into damp, dingy cellars, and said he knew nothing of St. Paul. We then tried the house on the other side of number two. It was a baker's shop. An entrance led from it into the room which we wished to reach, but it was blocked with flour barrels, sacks, bags of grain, and tubs full of dough. To remove these was an impossibility. By climbing over the barrels and squeezing ourselves between flour bags and walls lined with

dust and cobwebs we finally reached the stairway leading below. What one has done another may do, though she be a woman. Mrs. Anderson was equally anxious to visit the spot, so with a woman's determination she crossed this barrier of flour, and wheat and dough. We were rewarded by seeing the old Roman stones of the room in which St. Paul may have written some of his most precious treasures to the Church of Christ. On reaching the street a crowd of old men without jackets or boots, and old women with napkins of every possible pattern and colour on their head, and about a score of children gathered around us. Our appearance was not calculated to command respect, for we were covered with flour and cobwebs and dust from head to foot. Brushes were soon in operation on every side of us. They asked us if we had seen St. Paul. Would you like to live there? inquired one old man with a twinkle in his eye, evidently thinking it an unattractive residence. A handsome *douceur* to the brushers, and we bade adieu to the Arabs of Strengari.

A few minutes' walk from the end of the Corso through winding streets, and the broad steps that lead to the Capitol are reached. There stood the temple of Jupiter, in which victorious generals deposited the spoils of war, and offered thanksgiving for their success in arms. It was rich in gold and precious stones, and for nearly one thousand years stood on this spot until the middle of the 5th century, A.D., when it was plundered and destroyed by the Vandals. On our left is the museum, rich in ancient treasures of bronze and marble. Here is the famous statue of the dying gladiator, and reputed to be one of the finest pieces of ancient sculpture. It is referred to the age of Phidias. The figure is supposed to be that of a herald from Gaul. He is leaning on his right hand. His left rests on his knee. His sword and weapons have fallen from his grasp, and his trumpet lies broken on the shield beside him.

His hair is matted, the death wound has been inflicted in his right breast and the blood drops are falling thickly down. The face and figure and attitude indicate a terrible struggle with death. The marble seems to whisper in the throes of death, "Oh, what agony!" And yet in spite of his agony, he seems in deep meditation, and is living again in the memories of the past. To see this work is to see one of the highest efforts of human genius.

I see before me the gladiator lie—

He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
The arena swims around him—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the
wretch who won.*

On the southern slopes of the Esquiline are a garden and vineyard, in which are the ruins of Nero's palace. It was called his golden house, and extended across the low ground where now stands the Coliseum, and even to the slopes of the Cælian. As one approaches, the building appears semicircular in form. A guide preceded me with a long pole and a light attached to one end of it. He showed some large rooms that probably were scenes of unbridled vice, brutal violence and death. The royal monster who occupied those halls spared neither friend nor foe. He was an assassin of the vilest type, debased and heartless. In the neighbourhood of the Forum there was a dense population living in the small and wretched houses of those days. In 64, A.D., a terrible conflagration broke out in this part of the city. It raged for six days and seven nights, and reduced to misery multitudes of the people. The destruc-

* Childe Harold.

tion of historic shrines was a loss to Rome, but the misery inflicted on the people was an act of the most wanton cruelty. To escape from the accusation of the people, and perhaps the assassin's dagger, Tacitus says, "he inflicted the most exquisite tortures on those men, who, under the vulgar appellation of Christians, were already branded with deserved infamy. They derived their name and origin from Christ, who in the reign of Tiberius, had suffered death, by the presence of the procurator, Pontius Pilate. They died in torments, and their torments were embittered by insult and derision. Some were nailed on crosses; others sewn up in the skins of wild beasts, and exposed to the fury of dogs; others again, smeared over with combustible materials, were used as torches to illuminate the darkness of the night."* Their crime was not their religious belief, but their refusal to join in the follies and vices of their heathen fellow citizens. They were not dreaded for their power, for they had none, but they were mocked and derided for their noble qualities. The ignorant rabble reviled them with contemptible names, like *Asinarii*, for they were charged with worshipping the head of an ass. Where St. Peter's now stands great multitudes of unoffending Christians were put to death to gratify the passion of the people and the cruelty of the Emperor. Clothed in burning pitch, living creatures in fearful agony illuminated the waters of the Tiber and cast a horrid light over the circus, where the Emperor, like a clown, drove his chariot among the meanest of his subjects. Thus Roman soil, by that monster of evil, drank in the blood of its purest and best children, and on that blood-baptized spot stands the most magnificent church in the world.

The rooms of the golden house are filled with darkness and creeping reptiles. The bath was lined with polished porphyry,

* Tacit. Ann., xv. 44.

and in the centre stood a fountain, whose waters never could wash out the crimes of the Emperor. There were colonnades and passages for walking when the heat was excessive, or the rain prevented a promenade in the royal gardens. The floor was of mosaic, and the ceiling was arched and frescoed. The colouring was fresh, in places, but age and the smoke of torches have almost destroyed the subjects. In many parts are dark, dismal rooms, which were well fitted for deeds of heartless cruelty. No light seems to have penetrated them. If they were prisons, they were sufficient to break the heart of the bravest of men. On the north of the Coliseum is the base on which stood the golden statue of the Emperor as god of the Sun. Though sunk into the lowest abyss of vice, the people welcomed him as a god.* On coins he was called "Apollo," and "Hercules," and the "Saviour of the world," and the poets urged him to secure himself in the centre of Olympus, else the equilibrium of the universe would be destroyed. He who had slain noble Romans and innocent Christians was a coward at heart. In his hour of need he threatened to kill himself, but had not the courage. Driven from his palace he fled from Rome, and creeping into the low chambers of the slaves attached to the villa, he held the pointed dagger to his throat, but it was driven in by one of his servants. Thus perished the bloodiest of tyrants and the meanest of men. "The candle of the wicked shall be put out, but the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

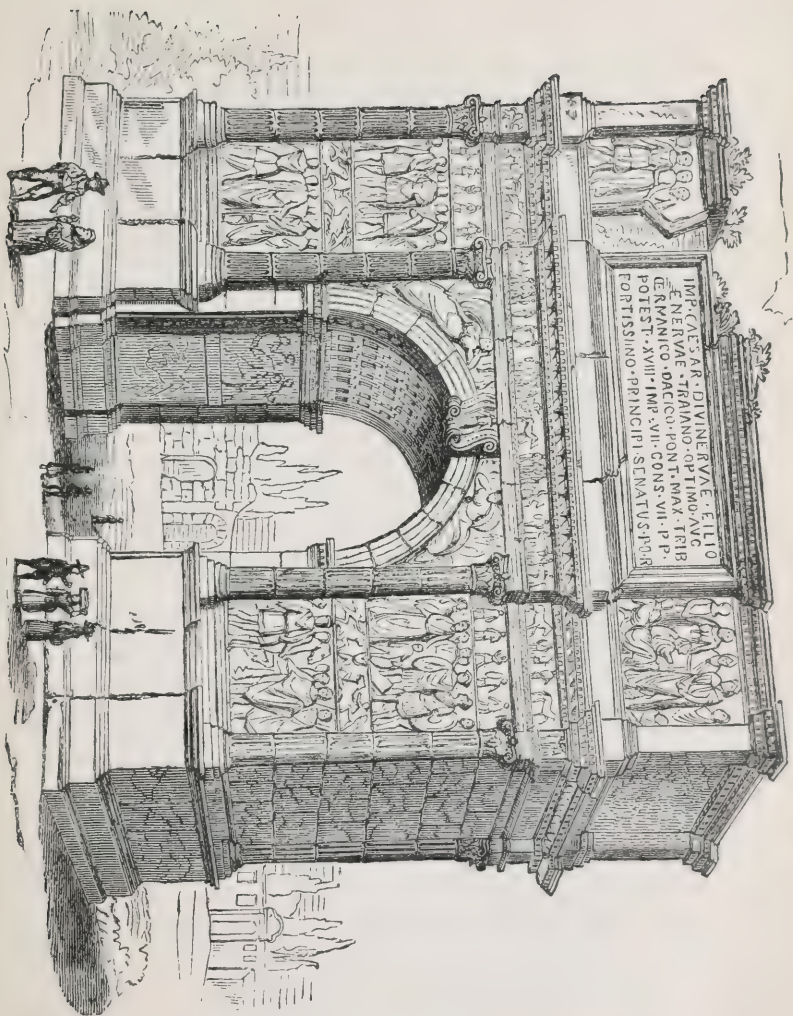
A walk of a few minutes in a north-westerly direction across the low ground on which the Coliseum stands, brings one to the Palatine, covered with ruins of the Republican and Imperial times. When those palaces and temples were built, whose ruins draw travellers from every land, Rome gave laws

* Early Days of Christianity, p. 41.

to the world ; her princes and nobles lived in unbounded luxury, which finally issued in the degeneracy of the race and the downfall of the Empire. Opposite the Basilica of Constantine is the entrance to the Palatine. Immediately in front of us is a grotto whose roof is covered with faded frescoes. In company with an archæologist of Rome, I turned to the left, and walked over a street only recently discovered, paved with large blocks of stone, that may have been laid down in the days when Rome was confined to the limits of this hill. On the right are the ruins of the Temple of Jupiter Stator. Beyond this is the Aula Regia, now spoiled of its marble covering and its frescoed ceiling, and its beautiful works of art. Nothing remains but empty niches and ruined brick walls. Behind this are the royal gardens and ruins of the library and the academy, where the young princes were taught philosophy, rhetoric and poetry. The walls of the garden are said to have been covered with mirrors by Domitian, that he might see behind him as well as before. For it was the fate of tyrants then, as it is always, to live in fear of a violent death.

To the right, adjoining the Aula Regia, is the Basilica or Court of Justice. The throne was at one end, elevated above the level of the floor. Here the Emperor sat. A marble railing separated this from the general body of the hall ; a colonnade extended down each side, the bases of which, and also one column, are still visible. Outside the railing and at each side stood a statue of Justice and of Jupiter. On an elevated place on opposite sides of the hall stood the criminal and his accuser. The brick walls are yet standing, about twelve feet high. No spot on the Palatine is so sacred as this. In this hall, in all probability, Paul defended himself. There are ruins more venerable with age than this, but they are heathen. This hall is hallowed to every Christian by the very presence and defence of the faithful and fearless Apostle of the Gentiles. No such

trial had ever taken place in that Imperial Court. "If I have committed anything worthy of death I refuse not to die, I appeal to Cæsar." Then came that long and dangerous voyage to Puteoli and thence to Rome. How great must have been the anxiety of Paul! He was uncertain of his own fate. As he saw the tombs of the Scipios and passed under the arch of Drusus, the great prisoner's heart would be filled with zeal to show the descendants of those famous soldiers the way of Salvation. On reaching the spot where now the Arch of Constantine stands, he would turn sharply to the left, and in a few moments would reach the barracks of the Prætorian Guard. After two years he was brought into the hall of justice. His defence was read before a heathen Emperor who was the foe of all that was noble and pure. He stood alone. "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me." The intolerant spirit already at work and the murders that had been committed, were the signs of terrible trials in the near future. Can we wonder, therefore, that the love of family and life proved too powerful for some who had only reached the alpha of Christian knowledge? But there were men who had imperilled their lives already. Where were they? Luke and Timothy, and Epaphroditus and Aristarchus, were probably far from Rome doing the work of the Church. Some of them may have been in prison and unable to help the mighty prisoner on the Palatine, by words and deeds of true devotion. If eloquence and tact, and the Grace of God could have been exercised over a soul not already dead to all noble impulses and all goodness, there might have been hope even of Nero's turning to the Lord. No such man as Paul ever spoke in that hall before. He was fearless of death. It is more than probable he was released from prison. "I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." But in 64, A.D., the city was fired, then came the days of awful persecution. Then probably he was condemned, cast into the



THE ARCH OF CONSTANTINE.

Mamertine, and finally, according to tradition, put to death at Tre Fontane.

A narrow path extends through gardens of orange and lemon trees and among the ilex, and shrubs, and flowers, down the gentle slopes of the Palatine on the south-west. A few rooms are standing about ten feet square. The walls are frescoed and covered with sketches and writing done by the scholars when the master was out, or his attention engaged. These were the schoolrooms in which the slaves and servants of the Imperial House were taught. It faced the Tiber and the Circus Maximus, and the Aventine Hill. The view from the school is one of great beauty. There would be no benches, probably. The pupils would sit on the floor or in the colonnades. The master would also sit with his back against the wall, or one of those pillars whose bases are still visible, and teach them from the early poets and philosophers, or from the more recent works of Horace and Virgil. The tastes and amusements of schoolboys have been the same, whether they were Italian, Scotch, or Canadian. What pleasure we have all found in cutting out our names on the seats and desks of the school, or carving a rough caricature of some bully, who was both mean and cowardly ! Or, if the master had tried to break his ruler on our knuckles, or had applied the birch to a degree unpleasant to our nerves of sensation, have we not carved on the benches and walls a figure of the dominie, which, however, had little resemblance to the original ? In order that there might be no mistake about the personality of the caricature we have written beneath "This is the Master." So the walls of this school are scribbled with names and caricatures. On one wall is a rude picture of a mill driven by an ass, and underneath is written "Work little donkey as I have done, and it will be well for you." On another wall is written "Corinthus has gone from school." Perhaps he had graduated, or become

too old to attend school, or had become ungovernable and the master had expelled him. However, those sketches are a bridge over which we can walk and see into deeds of school life nineteen centuries ago, and we can learn that schoolboy nature has been the same in all ages. One of the earliest caricatures of Christianity has been discovered on the walls of that school. A cross is roughly sketched. On it a man is crucified, with the head of an ass. Beside the cross a man is standing, adoring the crucified one. In Greek is written "Alexamenos is adoring his God." There is a very powerful support thus given to the truth of the Gospel. Near the Coliseum, at the base of the Palatine, are a number of small brick houses in ruins. Here most probably the Imperial Guard was stationed in the days of Paul. In one of these rooms, or in one of the houses then built round the Roman Forum, Paul may have dwelt during the two years mentioned in the Acts. It is probable that through the guards, or by direct intercourse, Paul made known salvation by the death of Christ to the slaves of the imperial household. Curiosity would draw that class to see the noted prisoner who had come so far and on such a strange question; and Paul was just the man to use every opportunity to teach them of Christ crucified. While imprisoned in Rome he wrote to the Church at Philippi, "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household,"* which proves that Christianity had penetrated into the imperial palace. This graffite caricature is witness that the truth was known by the slaves on the Palatine. It is evidence that the theme of Paul was Christ and Him crucified, and that this main fact of the Christian religion was the theme about which people spoke and thought; for when any subject engrosses the thought and conversation at the public schools, it is most certainly a prominent topic

* Philip. iv. 22.

in the community. This curious relic, now in the Museo Kircheriano, gives us evidence of the truth of Paul's written words, "I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." But what then in thoughtless ignorance and hatred was a theme of mockery has now become the symbol of power. The names of warriors and princes shall perish; the names of the brutal emperors written on temples shall be eaten by time, and their figures carved deeply in the stone walls of ancient ruins shall fade away from sight and memory into a deserved and an everlasting oblivion. But the power of the Cross shall become mightier in the coming ages, until the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God.



CHAPTER II.
IN AND ABOUT ROME.

Rome has fallen, ye see it lying
Heaped in undistinguished ruin ;
Nature is alone undying.
Shelley, Frag., lxvii.



THE Mamertine Prison, situated at the foot of the Capitol, near the Arch of Septimus Severus, is covered by a modern church. Ascending a few steps from the street, a door was opened by a guide, through which I entered into a dismal hole. Its sides are built up with large masses of volcanic tufa. Below this is the ancient prison, into whose gloom and filth prisoners were let down through a hole in the floor of the upper cell. Now visitors descend by a flight of narrow steps, and the credulous are shown a depression in the stone wall said to have been made by the head of St. Peter, whom the gaoler drove with violence against it. This lower prison is about twenty feet long, ten feet broad, and a trifle more than six feet high. Three of the sides are built of tufa, the other is the rock. It is supposed to have been originally a quarry, and the prison to have been built over a well called Tullianum. The spring is shown as the water St. Peter miraculously caused to flow, with which to baptize his gaolers whom he had led to believe in Christ. Sallust says of this prison, "The appearance of it from the filth, the darkness and the smell is terrible." Secret passages led from the Mamertine to the

Capitol and in other directions. From a narrow lane north-west of the prison I entered a subterraneous chamber from which there was a connection with other chambers in the direction of the Mamertine, so that the so-called Mamertine seems to have been connected by narrow passages with other terrible cells in which deeds of unspeakable cruelty were done, and brave captives perished. Jugurtha, Joras and Sejanus were starved there or put to death by violence. It would be difficult to imagine a more terrible dungeon. No light, no fresh air came in except from that hole in the centre of the ceiling. Everything was planned to deprive the prisoners of the rights which God has given all men, and of which no Government now dares deprive the vilest criminal. There is no clearer evidence of the superiority of the Gospel over heathenism than the high estimation in which it holds human life. What horrors have been perpetrated in that dungeon in Rome! What wrongs! What violent murders! The awful scenes of those days, let us hope, are never to be repeated on earth again, and that Christianity will gradually wipe out all wrongs from the laws of nations, and human life be brighter and happier through the spirit of Christ on earth.

Beyond the Capitol, the Forum, and the Temples of Vespasian and Concord, and ruins of remote ages, stands the Arch of Titus, at the summit of the old Via Sacra. It is forty-nine feet high, forty-nine feet long, and sixteen and a half feet wide, and was erected to commemorate the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. No Jew will walk under this Arch. He will make a wide detour to avoid passing under it, unless compelled. Under the Arch, on one side, the Roman soldiers are carrying away the holy vessels from the Temple, the table of shew-bread, the silver trumpets and the seven-branched candlestick. On the other side the Emperor is drawn in a chariot by four horses, and is being crowned by Victory. Around him the

people are cheering mightily for the returning conqueror. Josephus, in enumerating the spoils of war and glory of the triumph on the return of Titus to Rome, says,* “ But for those that were taken in the Temple of Jerusalem, they made the greatest figure of them all; that is, the golden table, of the weight of many talents; the candlestick, also, that was made of gold. And, after having returned from wars of conquest, Vespasian built a temple to Peace, in which he laid up, as ensigns of his glory, those golden vessels and instruments out of the Jewish Temple. But still he gave order that they should lay up their law and the purple veils of the holy place, in the royal palace itself, and keep them there.” On that Arch at the foot of the Palatine is engraved the evidence not merely of the truth of Josephus, but of the words of our Lord in reference to the coming destruction of the city, and the doom of the Temple: “ The days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.”†

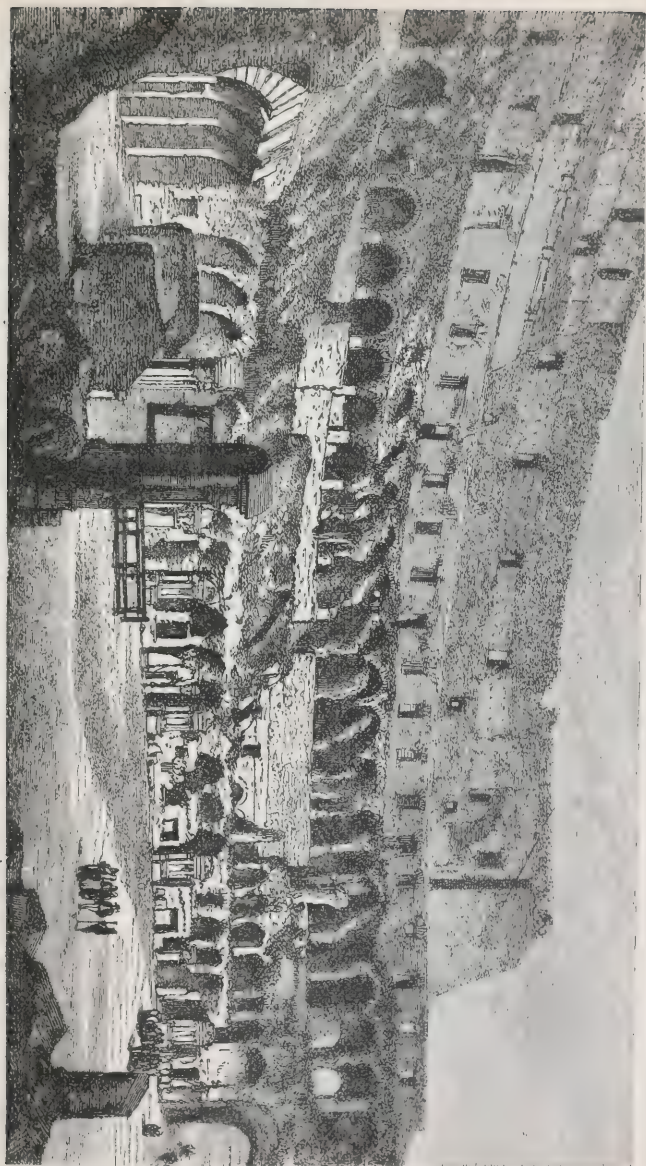
It is a walk of a few minutes from the Arch of Titus to the Coliseum, one of the most stupendous ruins of antiquity, which impresses the mind with the idea of its magnitude more than even the Pyramids of Egypt. It consists of four stories on the side next to the Esquiline, and is one hundred and fifty-six feet high. The outside is covered with marble, and statues were placed in the niches in the second and third stories. The columns of the first, second and third stories were of the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian order. The form of the Coliseum is elliptical; its longest diameter is two hundred and five yards, and its shortest one hundred and seventy yards. The interior had from sixty to eighty rows of marble seats, and was capable of containing 80,000 spectators. The fierce nature of

* Josep. Wars of Jews, bk. vii. sect. 5, 7. † Luke xxiv. 6.

the Romans demanded stronger food than the refined dramas of Greece. To satisfy them the Coliseum was completed in 80 A.D. for gladiatorial shows and mimic naval warfare. At its opening 5,000 wild animals were killed, and the amusements continued for one hundred days.

Nero and Caligula used to strew the arena with cinnabar instead of sand. The wire net that separated the gladiators and beasts from the spectators was of gold, and the wall that divided the classes of spectators was set with precious stones. During the triumph of Trajan, over 10,000 gladiators fought for the amusement of the people, and the madness for such shows so inflamed the minds of all classes that even emperors and women fought. Perhaps no spot of equal size on this globe has been drenched with the life blood of so many human beings as the area of this mighty Coliseum. Holy martyrs as well as heathen gladiators have met death within those lofty walls. Ignatius of Antioch is said to have perished here. The lions devoured his flesh, and the Christians gathered his bones under the safe covering of night. *At the entrance to the Coliseum and at the foot of the statue of the Sun, men and women perished in the flames kindled by hopeless ignorance and heathen bigotry. Many, like Ignatius, for the love of God, were martyred by the most cruel tortures, by fire and iron, and by the devouring jaws of wild beasts. If men who see in Christianity only an ancient superstition, powerless for good, and hope for the world's deliverance from evil in the progress of intellect and in the refinement of Art, would stand in that area of the Coliseum, and people it with its tens of thousands as of old, and compare them in their character and their pleasures with the citizens of European or American capitals, the refining and holy influence of Christianity will clearly appear. Let them remem-

* Walks in Rome, p. 137.



COLISEUM, AT ROME.

ber that emperors in their purple sat there. Let them remember that the vestal virgins who devoted their lives to the service of heathen religion, and the wealth and fashion of Rome sat on those seats and spent weeks in succession gloating over scenes of brutal carnage. Perhaps some Christian man or woman is led into the arena whose only crime is, they fear God, and live blameless lives. No eye of pity may look down from that sea of faces on the defenceless victim. Alone he stands and fearlessly faces the agonies of a terrible death. The wild beast may hesitate to attack, and the human beasts in purple and fine linen send out a shouting like the roar of thunder to express their discontent and to enrage the beast. Though no friend sits on those marble seats, One sits on a throne in glory, who beholds the scene. He shall clothe the martyr with strength so that he will not say "I deny Christ." His body is torn to pieces, and a roar of gratification thunders through the air. But the martyr has been true to his faith and has passed through the fearful sufferings of death to a better life with God. Such was the nature and such were the sports of the best of the Roman people, who enjoyed the heritage of Grecian culture and boasted the influence of poetry and philosophy.

Christianity, however, has taught nations to save life and not to destroy it. By its spirit, asylums and hospitals are erected for the insane, the aged and the unfortunate, instead of Coliseums for brutal games and fierce murders. The difference between heathen Rome and Christian capitals now is that the spirit of Christ governs these even though imperfectly, and has taught us that man is in the image of God and his life is superior to that of a beast. The magnitude and even the ruins of the Coliseum awe one as he gazes on the walls hoary with eighteen centuries, and the witnesses of so many horrid cruelties. Its stability seemed secure to the early pilgrims to Rome,

but time and plunder will destroy the proudest works of human genius and power. Their prophecy ran thus :

Quamdiu stabit Colyseus, stabit et Roma ;

Quando cadet Colyseus, cadet Roma ;

Quando cadet Roma, cadet et Mundus.

While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand ;

When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall ;

When Rome falls, the World shall also fall.

Rome is a city of churches, some of which are of architectural interest, and others famous for their antiquity or their history. About half way along the Corso in the direction of the Capitol, turning to the right, and after a brisk walk through narrow and winding streets, in which are Italians whose appearance does not make a stranger feel at home and assured of his safety, the illustrious Pantheon is reached. It was erected 17 B.C., and dedicated by Agrippa to Augustus. For solidity of structure, the beauty of its rotunda and its general symmetry, nothing excels it in Rome. None can enter the Pantheon without the deepest emotion, for there some of Rome's mightiest men in war and in literature walked, and worshipped the deities of Rome. The portico is one hundred and ten feet long, forty-four feet deep, and the ceiling is supported by sixteen columns of oriental granite, over forty-six feet high and five feet in diameter. The diameter of the rotunda is one hundred and forty-three feet, and light is admitted into the church through an opening twenty-eight feet in diameter in the top of the dome. No edifice in Rome impressed me with an idea of its strength so much as this. For nigh twenty centuries it has been exposed to fire and ravages of barbarians. The Tiber has risen up within its walls, and time has been powerless to shake its strong foundations. While other monuments are seen only in their dignified ruins, one can gaze on

this most perfect monument of the skill and wealth of Rome. Of its wealth of ornamentation, it is enough to say that 450,250 lbs. of bronze were taken from its ceiling to form the baldacchino of St. Peter's and to make cannon for the fortress of St. Angelo. It became a Christian Church in 608 A.D. Within its walls are buried some of Rome's most famous artists, Raphael and Caracci Del Vaga, who have reached the summit of fame, and added to the wealth of the world's treasures, and left as their legacy sources of pleasure for all time. The conversion of the Pantheon into a Church in which truth, though diluted with superstition and fanaticism, is taught, is prophetic of the ultimate triumph of the Gospel of Christ. As the niches of the Pantheon have been emptied of Jupiter, and Minerva, and Mars, and robbed of their heathen splendour, so shall all heathen ideas and forms be swept away by the river of the waters of life which shall rise in volume and power with the centuries, until it shall sweep away evil from the creeds, as well as from the hearts of men. Then the world shall be a holy Pantheon, from which shall be torn down the idols that defile and debase what is noble in the soul. Byron thus speaks of the Roman Pantheon :—

Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods,
From Jove to Jesus—spared and blessed by time ;
Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods
Arch, Empire, each thing round thee, and man plods
His way through thorns to ashes—glorious dome !
Shalt thou not last ? Time's scythe and tyrants' rods
Shiver upon thee—sanctuary and home
Of art and piety—Pantheon !—pride of Rome.

Crossing the bridge of St. Angelo, with its figures as if guardian angels of the yellow Tiber, flowing sluggishly below, and passing along the Borgo Nuovo, the Piazza of St. Peter is reached. On the right and left are the immense colonnades,



ST. PETERS, AT ROME.

sixty-one feet wide, sixty-four feet high, and composed of two hundred and eighty-four Doric columns. In the centre of this enclosed area, which forms a splendid approach to the costliest and largest church in the world, stands a granite obelisk from Heliopolis in Egypt. The weight is thirty-six tons; it was originally dedicated to Augustus and Tiberius by Caligula, as the Latin inscription, still legible, testifies. On one side of this heathen monument is a Bible truth which the wise men of Heliopolis never knew, and is the foundation of the world's hope: The Lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed. "Vicit Leo de tribu Iuda." Beyond stretches the great façade, and above and beyond is the magnificent dome. By a broad flight of stairs I reached the vestibule, four hundred and sixty-eight feet long; then pushing aside the leather covering over the door, I entered. The magnitude, wealth and beauty of St. Peter's are oppressive. At first every object is colossal, but the visitor; its massive pillars, its statues of saints and popes, its chapels, the nave, the aisles, the transept, the dome, everything is vast. The church is over six hundred and thirteen feet long, and four hundred and thirty-five feet high to the top of the cross. The dome is six hundred and thirty feet in circumference. It is built on ground bathed with the blood of the martyrs. In 90 A.D. an oratory was built here, and in 306 A.D. Constantine erected a Basilica, working with his own hands in the pious undertaking. In 1506 A.D. the present church was commenced, and was completed at an expense of ten millions sterling. The princes of art have poured out their genius on the work. Bramante, Raphael, Sangallo, Michael Angelo, and Moderno have adorned it with the highest treasures of their genius.

Since Zion's desolation, when that He
Forsook His former city, what could be
Of earthly structures, in His honour piled,
Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,
Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty,—all are aisled
In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.*

I had no profound feeling of devotion in it. There is an impression that the God to whom such a structure is devoted is full of majesty and glory, but I could never come near to Him as "Our Father" in that great church. One could never imagine a sense of sin originating in a soul there, or a deep and thorough penitence for sin, and a consciousness of the abiding love of an Eternal Father. The immensity and the wealth of art are not favourable to such spiritual conditions. In the midst of treasures of gold and bronze and marble the spirit and the spiritual are wanting. It is not suitable for teaching men the truth of the Gospel, or inspiring them with heroic resolutions against evil and for God. Around the dome where it springs from the supports into the air are written in letters six feet in length, but which to the eye appear only a few inches, "Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam": "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church;" and beneath the dome one realizes best the magnitude of the building, its unity and surpassing majesty.

Ascending the Scala Regia, the visitor passes through a side door on the right into the famous Sistine Chapel in which are frescoes of Michael Angelo. The ceiling is covered with scenes from the Book of Genesis, representing the creation, the fall, expulsion from Eden, the deluge, and the sacrifice of Noah; and hand mirrors are provided so that by the reflected light the visitor may see these famous scenes to the best advantage. I

* Byron's *Childe Harold*.

noticed in the Sistine Chapel that man is full of vanity. Instead of being absorbed in the contemplation of the artist's work, one was smoothing his hair as he peered into the glass, or admiring his moustache, or curling its slender extremities to the proper position. Another was admiring his complexion and arranging the folds of his coat collar. This was done by sober-minded men, as to appearance, under the pretence of admiring the master-pieces of Michael Angelo on the ceiling. Vanity is in man, and all the genius of Art can never make him forget it. Though his mother or wife should declare he is only a common man, he will never believe her.

On one end of the Chapel is the world-famed fresco of the Last Judgment. It occupies the whole end of the Chapel. It is dim with age, the colouring is faded, and the wall is broken in places. These detract from the beauty of the work. There is a terrific grandeur in its conception and execution. Above, Christ sits as Judge; around His head is a corona of saints; on His right is the Virgin, also Adam and Eve; on his left is St. Peter, an old man with grey beard, looking eagerly into the face of the Judge. No mercy or gentleness is in the face of our Lord. He is no longer the One who will not break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax. In His face is the calm, resolute determination of a righteous and omnipotent Judge, to punish the impenitent and destroy evil. Beneath Him angels are sounding the trumpet, and the dead are upheaving the stones of their graves, and a great multitude is arising. On His right is the resurrection, and the risen ones are ascending to the Judge. On the left is Hell, and the condemned, striving to rise to heaven, are struggling in agony and despair with demons, who delight in throwing them back in the flames below. One, ascending, tries to save his fellow, but fails, for the abyss swallows him in its awful flames. A child is clinging to its mother's breast through fear of the trumpet

sounds. Below is Charon, a grave-looking old fellow with wings, ferrying over some into Hades. The two judges of Pagan mythology are there. The despair, fierceness and unutterable woe on the faces of those who are falling into the abyss one can never forget. The children of joy and despair are there, the one ascending to the Lord and their everlasting home, the others, beating their brows with their clenched hands, sink out of sight into the depths. The picture is most terrible to behold. But its horrors below are overbalanced by its glory above. It is a realization, by the mightiest hand of genius, of the Eternal truth, that sin abounds, but grace much more abounds.

There are few places in Rome of more interest than the Jewish quarter, the Ghetto. For nearly 2,000 years the sons and daughters of Israel have been confined by walls in a quarter of the city often flooded by the Tiber, and have been treated with cruelty by rulers both heathen and Christian. As early as the second century, B.C., Jews were in Rome. When Pompey took Jerusalem many Jews were brought to Rome as slaves. Caligula wished his statue to be erected in the Temple of Jerusalem. This, however, the Jews in Palestine opposed, and 30,000 of them were killed. From then until Sept. 20th, 1870, when the Italian flag was hoisted over their houses, synagogues and schools, cruelty and degrading misery have been their daily lot. They were forced to attend in the portico of Octavia to add to the glory of Vespasian and Titus, the conquerors of their beloved Jerusalem. At the entrance to the Ghetto is the Church of St. Angelo in Pescheria to which the Jews were driven every Sabbath to hear sermons against themselves and their faith. Laws were enacted that crushed their spirit into the dust. The leading streets of the Ghetto, Via Rua and Via Fuimara, run parallel with the Tiber, and are connected by many narrow lanes. Since 1870 many have emigrated, so that the Jewish population is reduced to 5,000. The streets

are narrow and the houses squalid. Many families have only one room, in which six or eight persons eat, live and sleep. Most of the business is done at the doors in the street. There men, women and children busily toil at their trade all day long. I saw their busy fingers sorting heaps of rubbish that might have been collected from Jerusalem to Toronto—old lace, old boots, old brass and iron, and soldiers' cast-off coats, pots and pans and vessels of every shape, size and name under the sun. The street is full, and so is the room. Before and behind the door are mountains of rags.

Daily, from morn till night they ply the needle, the scissors and the hammer. What would be a hopeless task in the hands of a western mother, and be heart-breaking, is done with apparent ease by the descendants of Rachel. Under their hands everything assumes a new form as if by magic. They are poor, but thrifty and diligent. In company with the late Rev. Dr. Philip, missionary for many years to the Jews in Rome, I visited the Ghetto frequently, and never saw a Jewish beggar in the whole district. They have five synagogues. On Friday evening at sunset, goods are taken down from the walls and door-posts on which they have been exposed for sale. The people, washed and clean, go to worship Jehovah in their synagogues in Piazza Del Pianto, where Jewish ambassadors once lived, ere Jerusalem had fallen and the curse of heaven had been poured on it. They wish each other a good Sabbath, and in peace enjoy their evening meal, well earned after a hard day of toil. The best of their shops are poor. I saw much misery in their houses, and signs of it on their pale, care-worn faces, but never was I importuned for money. Their condition is greatly improved, and they are no longer treated with injustice and violence. The late King Victor Emmanuel they call their second Moses. Under the free flag of Italy there are some successful Jewish lawyers and merchants. For centuries the

captive daughter of Zion has been in the dust. The heel of the oppressor has been on her neck. The cry of despair has gone up to Jehovah for eighteen centuries, from bleeding hearts in the Ghetto, and by the hand of the Mighty God they are free to-day.

The huge polygonal blocks of the Appian Way are yet in situ as they were 2,000 years ago. The ruts made by war chariots and carriages of princes are visible to this day. Passing the baths of Caracalla on the right, the tombs of the Scipios on the left, then under the ruined arch of Drusus and through Porta St. Sebastiano, one enters this famous road. Both sides are lined with the tombs of the great pagan dead. The large tombs are chiefly on the east side. Broken marble pillars lie scattered in every direction. Human figures are seen without heads, covered with richly carved drapery, and human heads and arms without bodies. Inscriptions in Latin and Greek on finely carved marble are cemented and erected on the spot where they have been found. At the sixth milestone is Castle Rotondo, erected during the reign of Augustus. It is circular in form, and probably was lined with marble and richly carved figures. Now it is a Roman farm house. I saw a piece of cloth stretched on two poles and on it some handfuls of straw scattered for a bed. The floor was mud. I saw no window nor chimney in this novel farm house. A huge gap served for door, window and chimney. High up on the outside a dirty woman shouted to a youth, probably her son, to look after us. He soon made his appearance from some mysterious hole in this tomb in company with a wretched-looking dog. Neither dog nor boy could be called bloated aristocrats, for they were exceedingly lean, and the face and garments of the latter had been long strangers to water.

From Castle Rotondo the Appian Way seemed like a white thread as it rose over the Alban Hills. Three miles beyond,

according to Dr. Philip, are Appii Forum and the Three Taverns. On the right are some brick ruins, broken columns and mosaic pavement. This may have been Appii Forum. A mile beyond these ruins is a place now called Tres Tabernæ. It seems to have been usual to have had inns near the Forums, and the one referred to in Acts may have had three divisions, one for the nobles, one for the officers of the army, and another for the soldiers and common people. All classes of Romans travelled on this road into Southern Italy, and some such arrangement would have been quite natural. To this place the Roman Christians came to meet Paul and cheer him. There is no evidence they remained a night on their journey, going and coming. The journey seems to have been accomplished in one day, which could not have been done if it were thirty miles from Rome.

A fine view is obtained from Castle Rotondo. To the south are the Alban Hills and Monte Caro. To the left, a little, is Rocca Di Papa. In the lap of the hills lie Tivoli and Frascati, and many other lovely and noted towns. Away farther to the left, where the hills sink down behind Frascati, is the spot on which the forces of Hannibal encamped when he threatened to annihilate the Empire. The dome of St. Peter's was bathed in golden sunlight as it rose up like a thing of air towards the blue sky. The peasants were hurrying past with bundles of sticks to cook their evening meal or for to-morrow's market. The Romans built their tombs, like their roads, to endure, and the custom of erecting monuments along the highways gave a strong stimulus to the ancient Romans to display wealth and taste as well as affection. This custom is very ancient. Joseph was buried near the road from Jerusalem to Damascus; Rachel was buried in the way of Ephrath; the old tombs at Bethany are at the road side, and just beyond the modern village; and our Lord seems to have been crucified near a public

road, for the passers-by wagged their heads and mocked Him. The materialism of a nation's religion seems to have been connected with a desire to erect grand and durable tombs. The stupendous tombs and temples along the Nile are evidences of this. Personal and eternal existence seemed impossible apart from the present body; for this reason it was embalmed and wrapped in fine linen; and the tombs of the kings and queens at Thebes are very ingeniously constructed—not to prevent their royal tombs being plundered, but to prevent the risk of the body's destruction, and so imperil their future existence. Along the highway at Ephesus also are vast marble tombs of the Greek and Roman times. But where are the tombs of St. John and the other Christians at Ephesus? Where the graves of thousands of Christians who died in the early centuries in Rome? Their religion was spiritual, and they knew their everlasting bliss did not depend on their earthly bodies. Their humble graves in the catacombs are seen; but the catacombs were to them church and home, as well as graves. In those narrow, winding galleries of the catacombs I saw the anchor, the symbol of their hope, on their humble tombs, and the fish, ΙΧΘΥΣ, the symbol of their faith in Christ. The dust of those tombs is that of men and women who passed through great tribulation into heaven. Their glory with God was their heritage, through Christ, for they walked not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

Italy has the elements of progress and power, a fine climate and a rich soil. In the olden days Rome lost the might of her right hand and the fire of her soul in the lap of indulgence, and the barbarians, fresh from their northern homes, smote her to the dust. Italy is now free, and there is another mighty factor that will help her onward. Until 1870 the only Protestant church where the Gospel was preached was outside the city walls. Now, churches and mission schools are every-

where in the city. In the army a mission work is carried on which is bearing fruit in making the soldiers better men and more loyal and patriotic. Italy's power will lie not only in political unity, but in Christianity being the guide of the people. If she be faithful to herself and take hold of the living truth, her name shall endure, her people be happy, and her power be for the well-being of the world.



CHAPTER III.

NAPLES, AND ITS CLASSIC SUBURBS.

“Naples still preserves the Grecian mode of life, through those who retire from Rome for the sake of repose, and through those whose age or weakness demands relaxation.”—*Strabo*, Bk. v. 7.



FROM San Martino, the view over the Bay of Naples is of vast extent and of exquisite beauty. Towards sundown small boats may be seen moving lazily along the shore, with their white sails spread to catch the gentle breeze, and steamships sailing out from the harbour for Sicily, Greece and Egypt. A few miles from land is Capri, on whose shores Tiberius used to sit, surrounded by a band of low Eastern fortune-tellers who were spending their time in idleness and iniquity. The inhabitants are light-hearted, and enjoy the present hour, careless of the future. The blue grotto and the splendid view from Monte Solaro are the only natural objects of interest to travellers. The beauty of the scenery and the uniform temperature make this island a favourite resort for invalids at almost all seasons of the year. To the right, away in the distance, are Pozzuoli, the ancient Puteoli, and the islands of Ischia and Procida. On the left, at the extreme point of the bay, is Sorrento, and nearer are Castellamare, Annunziata and Del Greco along the shore. Around the base of Vesuvius is the excavated city of Pompeii, behind which rises up the mighty volcano, belching forth from its

capacious cavern streams of lava, and clouds of smoke and ashes. Naples extends along the bay and rises in terraces up the vast natural amphitheatre until it reaches the summit. The Chiaja follows the coast and is close to the shore of the bay. Here, on a beautiful afternoon, are to be seen many tourists driving in stylish barouches and hacks of all sizes and descriptions, while the peasants are on donkeys or plodding along on foot. Orange trees in the terraced gardens are laden with golden fruit, and flowers of richest hue add beauty to the scene. Its situation, its fine climate and magnificent bay are the glory of Naples. Cumæ had been occupied by Greek colonists in 1056 B.C., and along the whole coast Greek settlements had been made. There had been a Palæopolis, and the more recent invaders founded a city here which they called Neapolis, or the New City. At a distance, Naples appears like an enchanted city for loveliness, but on closer acquaintance it is far otherwise. Its narrow streets are extremely dirty, the people are indolent and fond of useless display, and the importunities of the multitude of cabbies, and their incessant and violent cracking of whips, and the ceaseless pleadings of beggars for help, detract from the beauty of the city and the comfort of travellers.

POZZUOLI.*

In company with a few other travellers I left Naples shortly after sunrise for Pozzuoli. The road for some distance extended along the sea-coast. On the right, the hills were clad with vines and orange gardens. About four miles from the city is the island of Nisida, to which Brutus retired after

* "And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium; and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli: where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days; and so we went towards Rome."—*Acts* xxviii. 13, 14.

the murder of Cæsar. Now criminals are confined on the island, some of whom we saw at work in the distance. Pozzuoli is situated on the sea-shore, and swarms with beggars, the most impudent and persevering I had hitherto met. Originally a Greek colony, it was finally subdued by the Romans and became a flourishing commercial city. It was the Liverpool of the Roman Empire. To that city ships came from the far East with precious cargoes for the nobles and emperors of Rome, and from it sailed ships carrying Roman soldiers to the most distant lands. At the harbour the ruins of the ancient piers are yet visible. Near that spot Paul must have landed when on his journey to Rome to defend himself against the Jews, and make Christ's name known to kings and Gentiles. There seems to have been a church there before his arrival, for the brethren met him and desired him to remain seven days. We have no account of the origin of the church there. Strangers of Rome were in Jerusalem on Pentecost, who would land at Puteoli on their return, and it is more than probable that they made known the truth which they had learned themselves. This seaport town was in close connection with the East, and may not the mighty deeds of Christ and his marvellous teaching have been spoken of by the sailors or traders of those early days? The truth, however, was known. There were Christians who claimed the great apostle as brother. No tradition remains of his visit, of the house in which he lodged, or the place where he may have taught the people. The light and life of Gospel truth were quenched in the darkness and death of heathenism.

The Serapeum on the north-west of the city, and not far from the sea shore, formerly consisted of a square court surrounded by forty-eight columns of marble and granite. Serapis was the chief deity of the Alexandrians, and as they had merchant ships on the Mediterranean it was natural that the

cultus of this god should find a place among the citizens of that Italian seaport town. Parts of the columns of the temple have been eaten by shell fish, whose shells are yet embedded in the stone at a height of seven or eight feet above the present level. From this we can observe how far the sea has receded from its ancient level. I rode over the old Roman road, whose rough polygonal stones are yet in situ, towards Cumæ, founded more than ten centuries B.C. by Greek colonists from Asia Minor. From Cumæ Grecian culture and mythology moulded the customs and faith of the original inhabitants. The ruins of ancient fortifications, temples and other edifices yet remaining, attest the ancient wealth and prowess of the people.

From this point the route lay through a grotto of considerable extent to Lake Avernus. Our guide carried torches, whose light enabled the driver to guide his horses through the large blocks that were lying in confusion on the road. But the smoke of those torches of tow almost stifled us, and as our Italians was paid for each one, he had half a dozen blazing at once, which produced such an illumination and smoke as were both useless and uncomfortable. This lake is the mouth of an extinct volcano. It is about two miles in circumference. Its water is clear and very deep. This whole region was the scene of some of the most interesting myths of early times. The lake is enclosed on three sides by hills clad with fruit trees and shrubs and in the wild ravines Homer says the dismal Cimmerians dwelt, and here was the fabled entrance of Æneas into the infernal regions, conducted by the Sybil. At the point where the road turns towards Biæ and the Lucrine Lake is an entrance to the mountain, called the grotto of the Sybil; wild ivy and luxuriant shrubs overhung the entrance. Pushing these aside we entered a narrow passage, preceded by our guides. After descending this gloomy cavern for some distance, we turned to the right into a very narrow

passage, in which we found water about two feet deep. I mounted the back of my guide and my companions followed, each upon the back of a sturdy Italian. Into the darkness I went, the feeble torch light only intensifying the gloom of the horrid place. The passage terminated in a small chamber, with tepid water to the depth of three feet. This was the sanctum of the Sybil. The room is black with the smoke of torches. On one side is an excavation called the Sybil's bath, on the other is her couch, elevated above the level of the water. The walls of this chamber have been frescoed, as I could trace outlines of grapes and other fruit now almost obliterated. A hole extending into the rock is pointed out as the place through which the Sybil gave her oracles to the Roman people. Whether this is the scene made famous by the story of the descent of Æneas or not, it is well fitted for such a subject. As I was by far the heaviest, the guides carried out my companions first. Meanwhile I was left alone in that awful place, my torch almost burned down. I thought of the probabilities of being suddenly elevated by some convulsion of nature or sunk into the depths of the sea. What if those fellows did not return? Every moment seemed an hour to me, hemmed in by those gloomy walls. Standing opposite me, a mutilated marble figure, as if some ghost had risen from the dead, was visible in the dying light of the torch which I held in my hand. "Halloo, guide, hurry this way," I shouted, until my voice grew hoarse, but no response was made, no guide came. As I was about to remove my boots and stockings and plunge into the water and search for the light of day, I heard the footsteps of my guide. In a moment he came in sight, and was anxious to show me another room which he had not shown the others. I said "no more rooms to-day," mounted his back, elevated my feet above the water, and soon reached fresh air and sunlight.

POMPEII.

The most interesting of all the places in the neighbourhood of Naples is the excavated city of Pompeii. It is the panorama of ancient Roman life. Its houses, theatres, iron and bronze vessels, and its frescoes, tell us what those ancient Romans were and how they lived, nearly twenty hundred years ago. The ride to Pompeii from Aununziata is one of great natural beauty. On the right hand is the sea. On the left is Vesuvius towering up majestically his lofty head, wreathed in masses of cloud and smoke. The intervening space is occupied by gardens, in which oranges, grapes and vegetables are produced in abundance. The origin of Pompeii dates back to the third or fourth century B.C. Situated near Vesuvius it was exposed to danger, and at length was overwhelmed. In A.D. 63 it was destroyed by an earthquake, and on the ruins were erected those houses, theatres and temples, which are now seen. On the 24th of August, A.D. 79, the terrible eruption of Vesuvius occurred, which involved the city in lasting ruin. Showers of ashes began to fall, followed by showers of red-hot pumice stone, until the city was covered beneath the mass to the depth of twenty feet. Pliny gives a graphic description of the flight of the terror-stricken people to the sea, which was convulsed by volcanic power, and in which many perished; and from a place of safety he saw the terrible doom that befel the city. Many fled wildly in every direction with pillows and other coverings on their heads for protection against the falling masses of hot ashes and stone. It is computed that at least two thousand perished during those terrible days.

At the entrance to Pompeii is a small museum containing objects of great interest. It is a short panorama of the city, and to some extent of the life of the Roman people. In glass cases are a number of skeletons encased in lava, just as they

perished so many centuries ago. The finger bones of one protruded beyond the lava that covered the hand, and the flesh had been entirely consumed. Turning to another I saw the sutures of the skull quite plainly, and the teeth also, were quite perfect. One scene was full of interest. A woman was lying, and beside her a younger person who may have been her daughter. The position of the body seemed to indicate intense anxiety on the part of the elder woman to keep the younger from their threatening doom. But death overtook them both. One man was lying with his hand and arm bent over his face as if to protect himself from the falling ashes and stones. The figures were so natural that they seemed to have perished only yesterday instead of 1800 years ago. In that little room were skeletons of domestic fowl, of horses, also all kinds of household utensils and weapons of war. On the walls were fastened old chariot wheels that have rolled in those grooves one sees now in the pavement of the city. There are loaves of bread, charred cloth, rope reduced to a crisp, yet perfect in texture and outline, by which one can see into the public and private life of the people of heathen Pompeii. This is a city raised from the grave of centuries, and it speaks to this age with a many-toned voice. God has kept the Orient unchanged to bear its own testimony to this age of unbelief. For our good, too, has Pompeii been buried and raised again. It teaches lessons from its frescoes, its walls, its bronze tripods, its statues, that heathenism, however refined and cultured, can bring forth only evil fruit, for the seed is evil. It cannot make the people moral, or keep them from sinking into the lowest depths of iniquity. The evidence of Pompeii supports the truth of the apostle's charges in the Epistle to the Romans, against heathenism. If heathenism, when supported by the culture of Greece, and by literature and philosophy, could not preserve that city from moral rottenness, can these forces save

the nations now from the same doom? In so far as experience goes the safety of nations as well as individuals is the holiness of the spirit of Christ.

The streets are narrow, the broadest about twenty and the narrowest from ten to twelve feet. On each side is an elevated footway about two feet broad. The streets were paved with irregular blocks of stone, in which are yet visible the deep ruts worn by the carriage wheels and by the horses' hoofs. There was no possibility of turning a carriage in those streets: whether on duty or pleasure the citizens of those times had to drive round the block to return to their starting point. At the corners are blocks of stone laid on the street on which the people could step in crossing from one side to the other without plunging in mud and filth. The ancient trade signs are seen everywhere. Bakers and butchers and wine merchants seem to have predominated. Some pottery jars are standing in the shops where they had been used. They are of vast size and show the ancient Romans to have been a wine-loving race. The mansions of the wealthy were paved with rare marble of great variety. The interior courts were enclosed by colonnades, and the walls frescoed with scenes from Grecian or Roman mythology. In the vestibule the watch-dog was chained, and on the floor at the entrance to one of the splendid houses is yet seen, in mosaic, the usual warning to visitors, "Cave Canem" (Beware of the dog). The ruins of Pompeii, and its vast amphitheatre almost perfect, and capable of seating 20,000 people, show the ancient Romans there to have been a pleasure-loving people. They had the culture of Hellenism and the sturdy spirit of the Romans. But what have they produced in the way of moral greatness? One has only to see the signs on the houses, the frescoing on the palaces of some of the refined Romans, to see what culture and civilization do for the world without Christianity. There are ruins of

temples and theatres, and places of business and pleasure in Pompeii, but not one hospital, not one house of refuge for the helpless or the fatherless. These are the fruit of Christianity, and show its superiority over Roman paganism. Pompeii is a witness in stone and mortar, in painting and marble, to the truth of that picture of heathenism drawn by a master hand in the opening chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

ACROSS THE SEA TO THE PIRÆUS.

The ship sailed from Naples in the evening. The excitement of embarking freight and passengers had ceased, and the ship steamed out of the harbour. The view was one that will never be forgotten. The moon was rising, casting her pale light on the smooth water, and the lines of lighted lamps extended to Posilipo, and in the distance Vesuvius loomed up, belching forth flames of fire, and masses of lava and smoke. The lights gradually faded, and the rattle of the cart-wheels and horses' hoofs on the stone pavement, and the songs of the boatmen died away, and Naples was left behind. On the following morning Stromboli rose like a black monster out of the sea. In the forenoon the ship passed between Scylla and Charybdis. On the left the shores of Calabria were rugged and mountainous, while on the coast of Sicily a level plain extended inland for some distance. The whole region is volcanic, and the black mountain range is broken up by deep chasms, which, at a distance, give it the appearance of a mass of black sea waves. Messina is built on the site of the old city founded in the eighth century B.C. Captured by the Carthagenians, it was the cause of war^e between Carthage and Rome. It does an immense trade in oranges and olives. The harbour was thronged with ships taking on fruit for the Mediterranean towns and for Europe and America. The

cathedral has some fine carving on the main doors, and the roof is supported by some very old columns that are said to have done service in the temple of Jupiter in heathen days. Our ship then crossed to Rhegium, and a company of Italian soldiers disembarked. The city is built along the coast, and extends back to the hills that rise behind it. At this place Paul touched on his way to Rome. "Thence we fetched a compass and came to Rhegium." Though the city is new, the general outline of hill and dale was the same as when seen by Paul. Catania, like Messina, is built on the site of the old city founded more than seven centuries B.C. In its large harbour were ships from all countries and bearing names of all sorts, from Mary Louisa to the most fanciful of Turkish names. The city has often been destroyed by war and by eruptions of mighty *Ætna*. It contains some ruins of remote origin, among which is the Greek theatre well preserved, and whose size and outline are easily seen. Here Alcibiades addressed the citizens, and persuaded them to side with the Athenians in their war with Syracuse.

Far up the very summit of *Ætna* masses of black lava were visible; lower down its lofty shoulders were white with snow. The expansive base is covered with orange trees and vines. In the belt between the base and the snow range are oak, beech and chestnut trees. In 1699 A.D. a stream of lava, fourteen miles long and twenty-five feet wide, poured down on the devoted city and involved a large part of it in ruins. This belt of lava is yet seen where it poured into the sea. The deliverance of the city is attributed to a local saint, whose history is given in relief on the wooden screen round the altar of the cathedral. On the following day after leaving Sicily the southern coast of Greece appeared, rocky and dreary. On the slopes of the mountains that surround the gulf of Laconia were a few straggling houses of poor fisher-

men. On the very extremity of Malea, a small round hut stands in dreary solitude, in which a hermit is said to spend part of the year. He cultivates a few yards of sandy soil, and a few weakly trees struggle for existence. If isolation from duty and from the responsibilities of life, and contact with the utmost desolation qualify the soul for heaven, that lonely hermit is sure of admission to glory. On the right were the islands famous in classic story, and on the mainland had lived, when Britain was a heathen island, a people who were brave in war, who had made great progress in civil government, in philosophy, and in the refined arts of painting and sculpture.

Crossing the gulf of Argolis and the Saronic gulf, Sunium came in view. Then steering for the Piræus, Ægina and Salamis were passed, and at length came into sight the ancient and famous port of Athens—the Piræus.

It was dark when the ship cast anchor in the harbour. Lights from the cafés along the dock were throwing out their rays into the darkness. A number of small boats soon surrounded the ship, manned by stalwart Greeks, who made the shores echo as they sang some nautical song in modern Greek. One young man, with a face that would have suited the ancient sculptors as a model for their deities, said he could speak English. I employed him, but soon discovered his ability in that direction was confined to the one sentence, "I can speak English." The Government, through poverty or indifference to human life, has no lights along the harbour. I was forced to grope my way, therefore, by the help of the lights from the cafés. Two young men, an American and a Belgian, came on shore to see the Piræus, as the ship would not sail till midnight. As we were going towards the station, a customs official made signs to open our valise. I said in Greek, which ought to have passed as classical in the days of Demosthenes or Plato, or in the Hall of the University of Toronto, "I

have nothing here which is against the law." But that modern functionary evidently thought my Greek was some barbaric tongue, and probably felt contempt for me, as his ancestors did for all barbarians. He continued his pantomime, and made signs to open the valise. After satisfying the official that I had no tobacco or other contraband goods, we hastened to take train for Athens, searching for the railway station. Though my Greek failed with this Government official, I tried the porter who had our baggage in charge, with Greek which might have been heard at the Piræus 2,000 years ago. I told him to go to the railway station. He replied, "*nai, nai*" (yes, yes). As I was doubtful of him, I made signs of a wheel revolving, and said, "*sh, sh*" (puff, puff). He seemed now fully to understand me, and like a man who has had a wrong idea in his head, at length said boldly, "yes, yes." He led the way, and we followed. After winding through a few dark streets, our guide marched us into a large brilliantly lighted café, in which were Albanians, Italians and Greeks gambling, and lazily smoking their nargilehs. On finding this was not the station which we wanted, we made further efforts to drive into his mind the idea that we wished to go to Athens by the iron road. As Greece has been more or less isolated from the stream of travel for years, one does not find therefore many polyglotts among the people. In Egypt, Palestine and the Orient, generally, donkey-boys and common servants can speak fluently four or five languages. At length, after a multitude of signs and much shrieking, which more or less resembled the whistle of a locomotive, it suddenly dawned on the mind of our Greek guide that we wanted to go to the railway station. After I had waited a long time, finally the train started, and in a few minutes I had travelled over the whole extent of railroad in Greece, and arrived at the ancient home of orators, poets, and philosophers—Athens.

CHAPTER IV.

ATHENS, MARATHON, AND ELEUSIS.

“ Athens never was once known to live in a slavish though a secure obedience to unjust and arbitrary power. No, our whole history is one series of noble contests for pre-eminence.”—*Demosthenes, De Corona.*



WAR has done more than all the ravages of time and weather and earthquakes to destroy the ancient monuments of Athens. The ruins are found within a limited area, for in her palmiest days Athens was not of great extent. They are full of interest to the student of history, and the lover of a brave and intelligent race. The modern city has a population of 50,000, the streets are new and some of them quite British or American in appearance. But in the market the streets are narrow, crooked and filthy, like an Eastern bazaar. Only the houses of the wealthier classes are marble-fronted, though there is abundance of marble near the city, and only poverty and the primitive machinery for quarrying the stone prevent Athens becoming a city of marble. There is a lack of enterprise among the people; the shops are small, their stocks limited and of inferior quality. One chief cause of the backward state of Athens, as a commercial centre, has been the disturbed political state of the country. Beside this, however, the modern Greeks, like their ancestors, have a distaste for the steady toil of commercial or agricultural life. One who knew them well said “the Athenians spend their

time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing." This charge is true now, for they love to resort to the hotels, or cafés, or public gardens to dispute on politics. The hundreds of students in the University are eager to enter the arena of politics. Their aim is not, however, to be serviceable to the country, but to become members of the Government.

The hotel in which I lodged fronted on one side of the chief square in Athens, and opposite the Royal Palace. The proprietor was a Greek, whose main object was to gather in as many drachimas as possible from strangers. He was ignorant of the ancient language of his country, and so were all the waiters. The bill of fare was handed me, written in modern Greek, and done by no master of penmanship. The letters seemed as if made by the legs of a spider dipped in ink and then allowed to travel over the paper. I examined it carefully, from top to bottom then from one side to the other, and finally gave up in despair. In classic Greek I asked for meat and bread, but the waiter only shook his head in response. Even when I requested "water" he made a dumb show to indicate his ignorance. The proprietor was equally unable to comprehend my wishes, and I could only pity Greeks who knew not the language of their great philosophers and poets. However, a week's diligent study of the pronunciation and structure, or rather want of structure, of modern Greek enabled me to transact with ease all my business with the Athenians.

The Arch of Hadrian, opposite the Presbyterian Mission House, was the entrance to the temple of Jupiter Olympus. In the area of the temple fifteen columns are standing and one has fallen. They are sixty-six feet high, deeply fluted and the capitals highly ornamented. The columns consist of pieces of about two feet in length, whose surfaces fitted

exactly; they are held in their places by iron clamps and by a circular projection from the centre of the lower piece fitting into a socket in the upper; and so perfect is the workmanship, that notwithstanding the lapse of centuries, the joinings can scarcely be seen.

On the south side of the Acropolis are the remains of the theatre of Dionysius. The seats are cut out of the hill, and were lined with marble. They are semi-circular, and rise up the brow of the Acropolis to the point from which the rock ascends perpendicularly to the summit. Behind the uppermost seats are standing two graceful pillars, which once supported tripods, won by victors in the dramatic contests. Thirty thousand spectators could there enjoy the productions of their great poets. Sheltered from the north wind, and under the clear sky the pleasure-loving Athenians sat day after day, listening to the dramas, and the amusing and sarcastic comedies of their famous authors. There Aristophanes ridiculed mercilessly the people themselves, and the weakness and corruption of the leaders of the day. Through the lack of schools or anything like modern newspapers for the masses, the theatre became a teaching power in Athens, and in Greece generally. There the people were amused, and informed of the acts of their public men. But the lounging in the theatre, and in the agora throws into full light the aimless and useless life of the Athenians. Beyond the theatre of Dionysius, the sloping ground is strewn with masses of marble columns, and the heads and limbs of human figures or statues of heathen deities in wild profusion. On the west side, by a broad flight of steps worn by the tread of mighty ones of the past, I reached the summit of the Acropolis. On the area at the top stand six fluted marble columns. The immense blocks of marble which they supported have been broken and thrown down by earthquakes and ravages of war. Such is the famous

entrance to the world-renowned Acropolis. On this small area have stood the great men of ancient Greece—generals, philosophers and poets. Alcibiades, Demosthenes, the famous dramatists, stoics and epicureans, have been under the shadow of this illustrious spot. The mass of suppliants who went to worship the goddess in her sacred shrine, and multitudes of travellers from all nations, in modern times, have stood on that same spot, hallowed by the lapse of centuries, and the memory of men mighty in arms, literature, and art. On the right is the small temple of Nike Apteros—Wingless Victory. In the flush of triumph after Marathon and Salamis the Athenians thought nothing could defeat them. It was a beautiful idea to make the goddess without wings that she might remain with them for ever. But the hope was vain, and the task equally so, for in arms Athens was defeated and her power fled. Beyond the Propylæa and towards the Parthenon the Acropolis is bare limestone rock with a slight sprinkling of earth in places, and a few flowers peeping out of the crevices. Ruins of altars, and temples, and statues cover the summit. Between the Propylæa and the Parthenon is a space chiselled on the surface of the rock, eight feet by five, on which the base stood, which supported one of the famous statues of Athena, whose glittering shield and spear the sailors saw far out on the sea, when returning from distant lands. The Parthenon is a parallelogram, two hundred and thirty feet long by one hundred broad. The temple is surrounded by steps which lead up to the floor, and also by a peristyle of forty-eight columns, each thirty-four feet high. On the frieze were represented the Pan-athenaic procession in honour of the goddess, and also the contest of the Centaurs and Lapidæ. As far as can be seen from the ruins that remain the horses began the procession by walking, gradually their speed increased, and finally they are represented as rushing at

full speed. The figures are the work of the greatest artists who adorned the city, and gave it a glory that no other city in Greece attained. In the area of the temple stood the famous statue of the goddess, forty-four feet high, the work of Phidias. It was of ivory and gold. The goddess held a spear in her right hand; at her feet was a shield encircled by a serpent. The statue has long since been destroyed, and one can only judge of its workmanship from the brief details that have come down to us. Though spoiled of its glory the Parthenon is a splendid ruin of architectural genius, and shows the wealth and refined taste of those times, and with magnetic influence draws to the shores of Greece the learned of the earth.

The Erechtheum, a small temple to the north of the Parthenon, is very old and famous, and contains some of the most delicate workmanship in Athens. On one side is a portico supported by the Coryatides, and beneath this Cecrops is said to have been buried. On the north side the carving is as delicate as lace-work and impresses one even more favourably in regard to the fineness of the work than the Parthenon itself. The most ancient statue of Athena was of olive wood and stood in this shrine. Herodotus says of this temple: "There is in the Athenian Acropolis a fane dedicated to Erechtheus, and in this fane there is an olive tree and a pool placed there by Neptune and Minerva when they contended for the possession of the country. The olive was burned together with the temple by the barbarians; but the next day after the conflagration, when the Athenians at the command of the king went up to the temple to sacrifice, they beheld a shoot from the stump spring up to the height of a cubit."*

The whole area of the Acropolis is of small extent, but there were laid the foundations of Athens—that made her

*Herodotus, book viii.

power felt over Greece, Asia and Europe. Genius and wealth were made tributary to the spirit of the people after their great victories for freedom, and the Acropolis was adorned with the costliest monuments. Though more than twenty centuries have passed over those famous ruins, they yet stand to tell the story of the religious feeling and national unity of the age. When the Persians invaded Greece the Athenians sent deputies to Delphi. The response of the Oracle was "Fly to the ends of the earth, leaving your homes and the sharp summits of your circling city."† Finally, after repeated supplications, the Oracle gave them hope, "yet the far-seeing Jupiter gives to Minerva a wooden fort, which alone shall be impregnable." Some declared this was the Acropolis and fortified the Propylæa with wooden stakes. The Athenians believed a huge serpent dwelt in the temple of the goddess, and every month offered cakes of honey to it. These had always been consumed. The consumers, however, were the priests and the attendants of the goddess, not the serpent. Now the cakes were untouched, and the people concluded that the deity, foreseeing the doom, had given up the city to its inevitable fate. Then the Athenians fled to Salamis and in their ships found the safety promised by the Oracle. From Mars Hill the Persians shot arrows to which lighted tow was attached and which set on fire the wooden defences. They scaled the heights. Many Athenians threw themselves over the rocky battlements and were dashed in pieces, many sought refuge in the Temple. But neither the sanctity of the place nor the generosity of conquerors influenced the Persians. They slew the Greeks, pillaged the Temple, and set fire to all the buildings on the Acropolis. Persians, Romans, Goths, Venetians and Turks have destroyed its monuments. The

† Herodotus, book vii.

degraded Athenians have made quarries of these ruins. Time and weather have helped in the general havoc, yet they impress the traveller with reverence for the memory of illustrious men and a noble race. Pride and vice were joined with the genius of the Greeks. Their works expressed only natural taste and feeling, and so could only appeal to such elements of their nature as gave them origin. Their moral nature was therefore unsanctified by their temples and gods and religious rites, for it is the Spirit of God alone who can change the moral nature of Jew and Greek. And when Christ shall reign in Athens she will have a stronger defence than the Acropolis, and a mighty helper in her struggle for freedom.

The Areopagus is situated at the foot of the Acropolis. From the north and north-west it rises gradually from the plain, and on the slopes are square areas cut out of the rock, on which houses, temples and statues stood in former days. On the side facing the Acropolis it is abrupt and rises to the height of fifty or sixty feet above the valley. On this hill were held the meetings of one of the most ancient and famous councils in Athens. Originally its jurisdiction extended only to criminal cases, but in later times it included political and religious matters. On the south-east are sixteen steps hewn out of the rock, worn by the tread of nameless millions, and by the ravages of time and curiosity-vandals. On the top of the hill is an area about twelve feet square. A narrow seat is cut out of the rock on three sides. On two sides are two stone blocks projecting slightly from the judges' seat, on one of which the accused stood and on the other the accuser. Thus under the clear sky of Greece, surrounded by the shrines of their deities and monuments of all that was great in the nation's life, the judges dispensed justice from these primitive benches. Herodotus informs us Mars Hill was opposite the Acropolis and must have been close to it, for the Persians made

it the base of their attack upon the citadel and from it shot their fiery arrows against the Greeks. There is nothing grand about this hill. On its precipitous side it is only sixty feet high and is overshadowed by the height and extent of the Acropolis. It has no glory from its rugged grandeur, or massiveness, but it has a glory of its own in its historic association with great events and famous men. On my first visit to the Acropolis, my guide, an intelligent citizen of Athens, pointed to the insignificant hill at our feet. For a moment I felt, not disappointed, but surprised. Though I had read of it and seen views of it, I was unprepared for the reality. Some days afterwards when asked if I did not feel disappointed with Mars Hill, I answered, "No; for the scene recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Acts would give it an eternal interest though it were an ash heap or an ant hill."

Up these narrow, time-worn steps doubtless have ascended Solon and Aristides, and Socrates and famous Greeks, whose names are graven deeply in the history of Athens. It is especially interesting to Christians for the one famous speech Paul made to the cold-hearted and idle Greeks. The Agora seems to have included the space to the south of Mars Hill, part of which is now devoted to grain-growing and olive trees, and also the valley on the north-east side where the houses now cluster towards the base of the hill. Paul's teaching was so different to the soulless system of the Stoics and the debasing system of the Epicureans that they took him up to their famous council hill to hear him in detail. In full view of all the places sacred to their religious faith he commended their religious spirit but not their religion. There is some doubt as to the significance of the Apostle's words, "in all things ye are too superstitious."[†] The words "too superstitious"

[†] Acts, xvii, 22.

have been regarded as containing a charge of ignorance or idolatry, which Paul would not have made against his hearers at the beginning of his address. Hence the revised version translates *δεισιδαίμονες* "somewhat superstitious." If his object were to conciliate the Greeks it might be translated, persons of profound veneration for the gods. But, if we examined the word itself, we find that, literally, it signifies persons who are "excessively afraid of the demons or gods." Fear, not piety is certainly indicated. And this fact is seen in the following statement of Paul: The reason why he regarded them as persons excessively afraid of the deities in that city full of idols, was because he saw an altar erected to the Unknown God. The deities of their mythology were jealous, and if one were omitted who had no altar, there was danger that evil might befall Athens. The citizens, therefore, through fear, built this altar. Their gods and goddesses were so human in their nature and so much influenced by feelings akin to those of men and women that the Greeks were careful not to give cause of offence by any neglect in the way of offering or honour. Paul declares their excessive fear of these gods was vain, for they could do them no harm or good, and then tells them of God that made the world and all things therein. Though he stood under the shadow of the temple-crowned Acropolis, and had walked through their streets lined with altars and statues, though he was standing near the most sacred shrines, and in the midst of the historic glory of the Greeks, he dared to say the "Godhead is not like unto gold or silver or stone graven by art and man's device," and thus condemned their idolatry. They had obtained much of their mythology and the elements of their civil code from Egypt; and on the banks of the sacred Nile, before Athens was born, temples were built which far excel the temple of the Acropolis in massiveness and grandeur, and were not inferior in the grace of their

columns and the fine workmanship of the lotus, papyrus, and palm-leaf capitals. Yet, in their natural pride, they termed all foreigners, Barbarians. Though they had in the achievements of art and philosophy advanced beyond many nations, Paul informed them that on the platform of creation there was no difference, for "God hath made of one blood all nations of men." In this respect they were on the same level with the most ignorant races. This was unpalatable to the selfish and proud Athenians; and when he spoke further of the resurrection and the judgment, his words were too heavy for the trifling Greeks; they were opposed to their cherished faith, and the audience ended in confusion. On Sabbath morning I read the seventeenth chapter of the Acts, on Mars Hill. It was a glorious day; the air was bracing and the sky clear. The place and its associations were of the deepest interest, and as far as the eye could reach was famous ground on every side. The waters of Phaleron glittered in the sunlight like molten silver. Beyond the city stretched the fertile plain of Attica, dotted here and there with olive and fig trees. The Piræus and the sacred way to Eleusis were in view. Nearer was the temple of Theseus. At my feet was the Agora, where heathen philosophy and Christianity had been taught by the best men of their age. Near this spot also is the Pnyx and the stone Bema from which the mightiest of ancient orators spoke and stirred up the Athenians to action. Beyond was Hymettus towering up to the heavens, and to this day famous for its bees and its honey. Above is the Propylæa, and round the base of the Acropolis are the theatres that once were crowded with the gay, pleasure-loving Athenians, and temples in which they offered their devotions to their gods. Now they are in ruins, and the ground is strewn with the headless and armless figures of gods and men mingled in one common destiny of wreck.

I started from Athens early in the morning on foot for the scene of the famous battle. The usual routine is to go by stage or private carriage, and after visiting the battlefield to sleep at the monastery all night and return the following day. To make the journey on foot enables one to see more of the village life and the national customs of the people. Hence I preferred this method. There had been a slight frost the previous night, for ice of the thickness of pasteboard was formed on the water by the side of the road. The guards were pacing backwards and forwards near the entrance to the Royal Palace, as I walked rapidly past on that January morning. Outside the city the road was thronged with peasants driving donkeys and mules laden with withered vine roots to the market for sale. Two primitive-looking stage coaches drove past from Cephissia and other places. The Greek Jehus were in high glee, and cracked their whips at the prospect of a day's participation in the New Year's festivities. Inside and outside, the coaches were crowded with passengers, not of the beautiful type which a foreigner dreams the Greeks ought to be, but of common features and fierce expression. As they drove past they shouted boisterously their salutation, "*Καλη ημερας*" (a pleasant day to you). The roads were rough, and holes from one to two feet deep were quite numerous, but as fences are unknown in this part of Greece, the coaches and carts can easily be driven round them. Roadmaking is evidently in its infancy in Greece. Near Chalandri, a miserable village on my route, the peasants were making efforts to repair the roads. Baskets of earth had been dumped into the holes, but no effort was made to level them. This was left for the rain and travel to do. And it seemed to me riding over that road would be about as comfortable as over the mounds in a graveyard, or over the rough corduroy roads through a Canadian swamp. This village, that may be a typical one, consisted of one street, whose

houses had a tumble-down appearance outside. Inside there was the scantiest supply of furniture, and nothing was home-like or comfortable. The mild climate enables the Greeks in this part of Attica to spend much of their time outside, like the oriental people, and thus there is less inducement to make their homes as comfortable as in countries with a colder climate.

Domestic fowl and dogs play a prominent part in Chalondei, marching out and into the houses as if they were the legitimate owners. On my return in the evening I found the dogs anything but friendly to strangers. It was only with the greatest care and with the aid of a stout cudgel I escaped safely. On entering the street at one end the dogs began, and in a moment the whole canine race along the whole street came forward to the attack, and their fierce, long-drawn howls echoed in the stillness far over the Attic plain. Beyond the village some of the peasants were ploughing, others were digging trenches or setting their vines. As I was uncertain of the way from this point, I enquired in what once was good Greek, which was the road to the monastery, but the ploughman only shook his head at my barbaric language. I then asked in modern Greek for the "house of the holy fathers," and received direction. Along the base of Pentelicus I passed some old buildings, overlooking deep, wild glens, and commanding a fine view of the plain and the mountain. The wind rattled among the shutters, broken panes and balconies, and the place might have been a splendid scene for some famous romances. It would easily have helped imagination to conjure up wierd sights and ghostly appearances, and deeds of prowess and murder.

The monastery is situated on the brow of Pentelicus, and is reputed to be one of the wealthiest in Greece. It forms a quadrangle, having two sides occupied by monks' cells and other rooms. A wooden balcony, somewhat tottering and

crazy with age like the monks themselves, extends round two sides. The side towards the mountain is occupied by the church. The monastery has fifteen monks and a superior. They are lazy, dreamy fellows, but very hospitable. One old man, of huge dimensions, with a face round and red, was proud of his ability to speak English, but his vocabulary was of the scantiest. Like their brethren everywhere in the East, they lead a useless life; fleeing from the struggles that belong to us as men, they lose the opportunities of doing good and obtaining blessings that cannot be found inside the walls or cells of a monastery.

In company with a young man who had travelled over the whole of Egypt on foot, and was doing the same in Greece, I began to climb Pentelicus. It was a hard climb of two hours, at times, up an almost perpendicular path, at another time placing one foot on a firm stone and then springing up to another, or grasping the stunted oaks we pulled ourselves up. On the summit there were snow and ice in the crevices, with which we quenched our thirst. At our feet lay Marathon, on which Grecian liberty was won in the famous victory over the Persians, 490 B.C. The bay seemed a perfect semicircle, the plain was quite level and extended inland to the base of the mountains. The sea was calm, and gently laved the sandy beach on which had been drawn up the ships of the Persians who had come to enslave Greece, but had, instead, found their grave at Marathon. Shrubs of the deepest green lined the shore, and white houses dotted the plain, which gradually contracted into the narrow gorges of the mountains. Near a pool in the centre of the plain the battle raged most fiercely, the Persians broke the centre of the Grecian line, but the wings of the army closed in on them, and thus hemmed in by the mountains on one side and by the Greeks and the sea on the other, they perished. The dress and appearance of the

Persians, and probably their valour, according to Herodotus, had inspired the Greeks with terror. They, therefore, made a bold dash and won the day, and the mound yet visible on the plain covers the ashes of the brave defenders of their country. That victory was not only freedom to Greece, but its power has been felt through all the civilized world in triumphs of genius that have become the heritage of the race.

“Greece and her foundations are
Built below the tide of war,
Based on the crystalline sea
Of thought and its eternity.
Her citizens, imperial spirits,
Rule the present from the past ;
On all this world of men inherits
Their seal is set.”*

The climb had given us a good appetite, and we made a hearty meal on black bread and goats'-milk cheese, and for drink we used the ice and frozen snow on the mountain. We added a huge stone to the cairn that crowns the summit, reared by travellers in many years, from many lands. On returning from the plain late in the afternoon, we bade our friends, the monks and the shepherds, farewell. As we started for Athens the solemn, low chanting in the church sounded sweetly on the quiet evening air, far from the stir of busy cities. As we trod down the spurs of the mountain it grew fainter and fainter, until finally it ceased, and we left forever the kind-hearted monks in their lonely Monastery of Pentelicus. Darkness came on long before we reached Athens. We met peasants returning from the fields and persons from the city. As we passed through Ampelokipo, that claims the

* Shelley, Hellas.

honour of being the birthplace of Socrates, we received the usual furious attack of dogs, who regarded us as intruders. A light glimmered through the chinks of a small, dilapidated Greek church, in which service was held. Only three lights were visible in the whole village, and one of these was in a gambling-house in which the peasants were drinking poor wine and smoking wretched tobacco and discussing politics and the latest news from Europe. The one street of this village was a long puddle. A stream of water ran down its centre, into which we plunged in the dark, and in our efforts to guard ourselves against dogs and night robbers we could not watch our steps, and so floundered into holes and splashed ourselves from head to foot with a liberal supply of liquid mud. We consoled ourselves by saying, "Socrates, poor fellow, may have suffered worse and said nothing about it." As we passed the barracks at the foot of Lycabettus, the soldiers were hastening in to the roll call, in bands of jolly good fellows, singing Greek songs. On reaching the city it was radiant with light, bands of music were playing, boys and men were carrying illuminated ships on their shoulders. It was New Year's Eve; hilarity reigned supreme in Athens, and the people were preparing for the festivities of the morrow.

NEW YEAR'S DAY IN ATHENS.

As the Greeks reckon time after the old style, the traveller may enjoy new-year's festivities in Rome or Naples and repeat them in a few days afterward in Greece. Like the Scotch, the Greeks make this a special day of relaxation from business, and in private amusements. The night previous there was a lavish expenditure of drachmas by the paterfamilias, in the purchase of small sabres and guns for the boys, and dolls and brass ornaments for the small girls. Hermes and Æolus, the

main streets of the city, were thronged with Greeks in their holiday clothes. Their pent-up enthusiasm found an outlet in blowing horns, and beating drums and tin pans for general amusement. In the forenoon service was held in the cathedral. Through the kindness of one of the missionaries, I was admitted to a place in the church, from which I could see all the ceremony. The king and queen, members of the government, the ambassadors, and representatives of foreign powers were present. The royal family occupied a raised dais on one side of the altar, and a short distance in front of it. The king, who was dressed in uniform, seemed to take little interest in the service. He had a habit of closing his eyes and twisting the muscles of his face that gave him a ludicrous appearance. The queen, who is a member of the Greek church and in sympathy with its traditions and its truth, entered heartily into the service. As the king approached the door of the cathedral, the archbishop, bishops and priests met him and preceded him to the raised dais, which was gaily carpeted for the occasion. At the altar some of the priests stood with three candles in one hand, tied together with blue ribbons, intended to symbolize the three persons of the Godhead. Others held two candles tied in the same way, to symbolize the double nature of Christ. The chanting began as soon as the king entered. The singing, by a band of young choristers standing on each side of the altar, and led by a priest, was most wretched. The archbishop, with his crozier in his hand and his mitre on his head, muttered a few Greek prayers for the welfare of King George and Greece. The whole service, which was cold and formal, lasted one hour. On passing out, a royal salute was fired, and the party returned to the palace, amid much cheering, and cracking of whips, and prancing of horses, and the ceremony of the day ended.

Joy and grief often tread on each other's heels in this life.

On returning from this gorgeous display, a dead body was being carried past the Temple of Jupiter Olympus, to the modern graveyard of Athens. A young woman had died, and the body was carried on a bier by four men. A garland of flowers was lying on the head of the corpse. Preceding the funeral was a hired singer whose duty was to utter the most wicd and melancholy sounds possible. He was a small man, very lean, and of very sallow complexion, and had altogether the appearance of soon finishing his career, when some other would sing a solemn dirge at his funeral. Two Greek priests followed, occasionally chanting some melancholy strains. Then followed the near relatives and friends of the deceased. The proceedings at the grave were unbecoming, and left the impression that the Greeks have little true sympathy and no solemn feelings in the presence of death. And none can hear those long, shrill wailings, that become familiar to every traveller in the East, without recalling the words of Ecclesiastes, that picture the end of a life of vanity: "Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets." In the evening I witnessed a betrothal service in the Mission house. Rings were exchanged by the young couple, who were members of the Presbyterian church. An address was given by the minister and prayers offered on their behalf, in modern Greek. The parties betrothed may remain so for a year or two, and are then married. After the close of the ceremony, sweetmeats were passed round to the company. For a few minutes a brisk conversation in four or five different languages was carried on by the numerous friends who had been invited. Congratulations were extended to the betrothed ones. At an early hour in the evening the company broke up, and my first New Year's Day in Athens closed.

In company with the Rev. Mr. Sampson, of the American Mission, I started out at eight a.m. for Eleusis, so famous in

ancient times. It had been raining the night previous, the sky was clouded, and the air chilly. The roads were heavy, and the weather seemed unpropitious, but as it was my only chance of seeing the ancient site of Eleusis I set out with a bold heart. The carriage was comfortable, but the horse was small and not well fed, consequently its bones and not its beauty were most prominent. To make matters worse, I was told it had been sick and could not go as fast as I might wish or expect. Whatever my wishes were, my expectations were not very high after I had seen the poor animal that was to put motion into the wheels and take us on our long journey. I hesitated to inflict cruelty on the horse, and thought to walk, but the slushy roads and my long tramp to Marathon deterred me. As the owner had confidence in the staying power of his horse, I consented, and a start was made. We wrapped ourselves up as well as we could after packing away our lunch in the bottom of the carriage, and then drove in the direction of the hill Colonus, the site of the Academy of Plato, and the scene of one of the famous plays of Sophocles. Now only a few pieces of broken marble columns lie scattered about, and the tall, black cypress grows on that noted spot. Here, and along our journey over the plain of Attica are wretched houses of the peasants. They are constructed of pressed mud with stones intermixed, the floor is the earth itself, the roof is covered with reeds and straw. For windows, there are two holes, closed in winter with boards to exclude cold and rain. In summer they admit light. The peasant, his wife and family, also a cow or donkey and hens, live in a friendly way in one house. The sleeping apartments for the human occupants are separated from the large room on the floor, or are in the upper part of the house, but they are equally wretched with the main room on the floor. With such houses, scanty clothing, and little fire, a severe winter is a calamity to the

peasants of Greece. The day was bitterly cold, and a blinding snow-storm swept down from the north-east. It was not a clear, bracing day, like many in our Canadian winters. It was a damp, chilly day, that almost kills out the enthusiasm of any man in Greece. Behind us, Hymettus was covered with snow, and the mountains before us. Two stage coaches came rattling along from Bœotia. Whether the passengers were the stupid fellows the Athenians said they were, or not, they had a blue and doleful appearance that day. The driver was guiding his steeds, hurrying at good speed, and cheerfully saluted us. The custom in prosaic lands, we found beneficial in Greece, for we dismounted and ran beside our carriage for some time. Along with us were some young Greeks, driving carts to Eleusis, who trudged along barefooted, and with bosoms exposed to wind and storm. They were sturdy fellows, who felt no cold and feared no danger. The hills on both sides of the pass of Daphne, through which our route lay, afforded us shelter. On our right, at the base of the hills, ran the old sacred way. The side next the valley was built up to form a level road, and the ruts of the ancient carts and chariots are yet visible, cut deeply into the rock. About midway down the pass, where a spur of the mountain projects far into the valley, are the ruins of an old temple, whose large foundation stones are yet in their old position. They are chiselled along the edges, like some of the large stones in the lower tiers of the walls of Jerusalem, and in the temple of Baalbeck in Syria. May not therefore these stones have been carved by Phœnician workmen? Or, if not, the Greeks may have become acquainted with that style of workmanship in Palestine and Syria. On the face of the rock that had been enclosed by the temple were niches, some square, others in the form of a segment of a circle, in which votive tablets had been placed. When we emerged from the pass, the road to the right

extended along the shore of the bay to Eleusis. On the left was the island of Salamis and the bay in which the famous victory over the Persians was won, ten years after the battle of Marathon. A tongue of land stretches into the sea for some distance. On this spot Xerxes had his throne built, from which he watched the battle. A circular area, enclosed by a ruined wall, is yet visible on an elevated spot. Here the king sat, and when any captain or private person did any special feat of valour, his name and city were noted by the king's secretaries. The battle was one of fierce bravery: the Persians fighting for the reward of their king, the Greeks fighting for life and freedom. In front of this narrow strip of land, that reaches far into the sea, are three islands, situated close to each other in the bay. Here the ships were stationed, and the battle was fiercest. We are told strange omens appeared before the battle. A cloud of dust came from Eleusis, over those hills on our right, as if it were produced by the march of a large army. A voice was heard issuing from the cloud, which rose high up, and went in the direction of Salamis, and toward the Greeks. This was taken to signify the defeat of the Persians, and it inspired the Greeks with courage. The Persian ships were broken and sunk. The fleet suffered a terrible defeat, and the coast of Attica was strewn with corpses and the wrecked ships. The king attributed his defeat to the cowardice of his allies, and said: "My men have behaved like women, and the women like men." The event of the battle seems to have deepened the faith of Herodotus in the ancient oracles, one of which he quotes, in giving an account of the victory. "When the Persians shall have extended their line of ships on the sacred shore of the golden-quivered Artemis, and of the sea-girt Cynosura, and, when mad with hope, he shall have pillaged the fair Athens, when brass shall meet with brass, and Mars shall empurple the

deep, then shall the far-sighted Saturn and the benign Victory bring a day of deliverance for Greece." *

We halted and lunched at a miller's house about three miles from Eleusis. The keen wind swept over the bay, and chilled us thoroughly, so that we were glad to find shelter for ourselves and our horse. There was nothing about the mill that reminded us we were in the classic land of Greece. It was a wretched, two-storied, stone building. On the basement floor was part of the machinery of the mill. In one corner a poor donkey was trembling with cold, and in another part two little fellows were tossing leptas. We tied our horse on the sheltered side. The wind howled through the chinks and broken windows of this tumble-down structure, as if the spirit of the ancient Furies were threatening the miller and his machinery with destruction for invading the old soil with modern works. Our teeth were chattering with cold as we climbed the tottering stairs to the upper story, which we found almost as wretched as the place on the ground floor. The upper area was divided by a rough partition into two rooms. In the larger one was a part of the machinery of the mill, on the floor were some bags of wheat to be ground, in one corner was a cupboard in which were a few tin and crockery dishes. As we entered, the miller, his son, a boy of about twelve years, and a hired man were huddled together round a handful of embers in a small fireplace. Before them was a small table, from which they were eating their mid-day meal, consisting of black bread, olives, and sour wine. Two rough planks, with cross pieces nailed at each end for legs, did service for a seat. We all huddled close to the dying embers, over which we spread our hands for a little warmth, but they were so few and so cold that an eastern wizard might have swallowed

* Herod., bk. viii., sect. 4.

them among his other tricks without harm to himself. The scene was wretched, but novel in the extreme. For windows there were holes, facing the bay and Eleusis. These were boarded up to exclude wind and rain. Where we lunched, were three cats whose backs were arched like miniature camels, one plate, one jug, a greasy cupboard into the depths of which the boy now and then plunged and fished up some more black bread, which resembled a piece of granite, more than the staff of life. Occasionally the miller threw a handful of dry twigs on the fire, which crackled and blazed for a moment, and cast a lurid glare through the room. We luxuriated in the light and genial warmth for a moment, the blaze soon died away, however, and the rain pelting in through the holes, and the cold wind howling through innumerable crannies again won the mastery in the old house. We ate our lunch, thankful for our mercies, and after helping the boys to some of our provisions, which they enjoyed heartily, and paying for our shelter, we left the miller and his old house, both of whom in a few years will have finished their work, and the old house will be a heap of ruins, but may the owner find a better home in the world to come.

There are no ruins of importance at the site of ancient Eleusis. The modern town is situated on the shore of the bay, and the scenery was full of romantic wildness. The sea laves it on one side, and behind extends a range of hills, and the whole neighbourhood is one teeming with memories of glorious deeds. Only a few ruins of the temple of Demeter are to be seen. The modern town is a miserable place, its inhabitants poor, and without enterprise. The glory of the ancient shrine has perished, and the fame of old Eleusis lives in the brief record of ancient authors. As we entered Athens on our return, it was dark. Greeks, clothed in their warmest cloaks, were hurrying to and fro like dark shadows to escape the furious rain-storm that had set in. In a few moments my lodgings near

the Acropolis were reached, from which I could see the lamp burning on the church of St. George, on Lycabettus, like a lonely star in the vast sky of darkness that shrouded it.

Under the shadow of the Acropolis a power is quietly working that will do more for Greece than all her ancient glory or than her present statesmen. Here are situated the mission premises of the Southern Presbyterian Church of the United States. It is a plain, unpretentious, two-storied building, but mighty work has been done there for Greece. In an upper room divine worship is conducted. Plain benches extend along the whole length of the room, with an aisle along the centre. At one end is a raised platform from which the minister speaks. In front of the platform is a small organ used in the public worship. Hanging on the wall, behind the pulpit, is a large sheet of canvas on which passages of Scripture are printed. There is no danger of the Greek converts becoming lovers of ritualism, as far as the influence of their surroundings goes, for the whole building, interior and exterior, is plain in the extreme. My first visit to this upper room was during the week of prayer. About two hundred persons were present. The superintendent of the mission, Rev. Dr. Kalopothakes, conducted the service. The musical service was led by the Rev. J. R. Sampson, accompanied by the organ. The first hymn sung in the church was "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," in modern Greek, and to the tune familiar to me from my earliest recollection. The preacher was full of enthusiasm. He was gifted with the true qualities of an orator, faith in his subject, clearness of thought, a good voice and refined language. To me the service was very impressive. In that city, in which heathen culture had reached its climax of perfection, in which philosophy and art had flourished when other parts of Europe were occupied by warlike and barbarous tribes, and almost within sight of the Pnyx where the grandest of ancient orators had moved his countrymen to peace or war by his

wise and powerful words, almost in sight of the Areopagus on which the Apostle to the Gentiles had preached the eternal truth of Christ to a cold and critical audience, a descendant of those ancient Greeks taught that same gospel to his countrymen, which is yet to redeem Greece from national degradation and sin.

The Southern Presbyterian Church has mission stations also at Saloniki, in different parts of Northern Greece, on some of the islands near the mainland, and at the Piræus. At the latter place service is conducted every Sabbath in Greek and English. Dr. Kalopothakes was converted in the early days of mission work, when Dr. King was in Greece. He left Greece for a time and studied theology in Union Seminary, New York. After graduating, he returned and entered with unflinching courage and devotion upon his work. He is a patriot as well as a Christian, and by example and personal sacrifice has done much for the interests of his country. Though abundant in labours, he has translated into modern Greek, "Hodge on the Atonement," which will be used by the Greek students in theology. He publishes a weekly paper, "*ὁ ἀστὴρ τῆς ἀνατολῆς*," the Star of the East. This is the oldest paper in Athens, and is read by many Greek families who are not Protestants, and thus is the means of disseminating knowledge among multitudes of the Greek people. It has now been in existence a quarter of a century, and has a circulation beyond Athens and Attica, so that its influence is far-reaching. Besides, for fifteen years a child's paper has been published under his care. The Greeks are haughty, and proud of their ancient region and the achievements of their ancestors. They are dead in the formalities of their national Church. They are ignorant of the spirit and life of Christianity. But the forces are now at work that will, ere long by the blessing of God, bring lasting good to Greece.

CHAPTER V.

ALEXANDRIA TO CAIRO.

“The Egyptians, as their climate is unlike other climates, and their river unlike other rivers, so in manners and laws are they in almost all respects opposed to the rest of the world.”—*Herodotus*, bk. ii., s. 1.



LEFT the Piræus at daylight on Monday, January the 16th. The wind was blowing a heavy gale, and the waves were dashing wildly into the harbour. I had spent Sunday in the church at the Piræus and made the acquaintance of a few citizens and amongst others Mausky, the sexton, who had been a priest in the Greek Church, but had been removed from office because his son had become a member of the Presbyterian Church. Mausky was groping for the truth and gradually finding it. I spent the evening with the old man in the church, waiting for the departure of the ship for Alexandria. As she was late in arriving at the Piræus, it was early on the following morning before she steamed out of the harbour. The weather was cold, and intensified by a sharp wind. The room in which I spent the evening was small. In one corner was a very diminutive stove, with an almost invisible stove-pipe which conducted the smoke through a broken window-pane. We huddled close to this small heater, and spreading my hands on it, I was grateful for the little warmth it supplied. Our conversation which was chiefly on religious subjects, was conducted partly in ancient, and partly in modern, Greek, eked

out by various signs. In his opinion, the Church of Christ is not a vast monopoly which makes its existence and power felt by organization and outward show, but is the great kingdom of all who love the Lord Jesus in spirit and truth. As I stepped into the little boat to row out to the steamer, I felt regret at parting from the old man, and for some time after leaving the shore, I could see in the darkness the faint outline of Mausky, with his long hair and black gown fluttering in the wind, and I could hear, above the splashing of the waves, the old man's prayer that God might keep me safely on the sea. At daylight the steamer sailed out of the harbour, and in the distance the dim outline of the Acropolis faded from view; then the Piræus and Salamis; and two days afterwards the low coast line of Egypt came into sight. In the harbour, were ships flying the flags of all nations. Beyond, lay Alexandria, the most conspicuous objects of which were the graceful minarets of the mosques rising above the general level of the city. We sailed slowly into the Eunostus harbour, which is protected by an extensive breakwater formed of massive blocks of stone and extending parallel with the shore. On the western end of this breakwater is a lighthouse, in which the ragged keeper stood, waving a tattered handkerchief as the ship steered carefully through the dangerous shoals. On the docks were truly Oriental scenes. Egyptians, with spotless turbans, clothed with brilliant gowns, and their feet encased in yellow slippers, were riding smart donkeys; some also were praying, while others were watching a chance to plunder the green infidels. To the left, was the Heptastadium, which connects the island with the mainland, now occupied by public buildings, and beyond it is the eastern harbour. At the eastern end of the island of Pharos is the rock on which the famous lighthouse stood built by Ptolemy II. at a cost of at least \$825,000. The arsenal and Fort Caffarelli are quite near on

the left, and beyond, to the north-east, is the Place de Moham-med Ali, from which streets diverge towards the site of the ancient Stadium, the Serapeum, Pompey's Pillar, and out to Fort Mex. The forts have been dismantled, and many of the European shops destroyed during the bombardment of July, 1882, by the British fleet.

Before anchor was cast, small boats were swarming around us, with swarthy porters ready to take travellers and their baggage, by force if necessary. The scene of confusion and noisy warfare that arose was novel and exciting. One soon becomes familiar with such sights in the East, and regard them with pleasure rather than otherwise. The Egyptians strive to-day as fiercely as in the times of Moses. As I was descending the ladder into the small boat, two Egyptians were struggling for the possession of a leather trunk. One strong fellow had it on his back, but the other was determined to have it. The former had moral right on his side, for he had been hired, but in the battle his antagonist had an immense advantage over him, for he had feet and hands free for action, whereas he with the trunk could only gore with his head, like a ram or a wild ox. The crush in the rear became irresistible, and the fighters were driven headlong, box and all, down the ship's ladder, among valises, hat-boxes and bundles of every size and shape imaginable. A sleepy-looking customs official on shore demanded our passport and scanned it carefully, every moment casting a glance at the person as if afraid he were an enemy who had come to spy out the poverty or wickedness of the land. After a slow and solemn examination of my baggage, I passed into the streets and life of Alexandria. The country is one that has always been fascinating to foreigners. Its ancient civilization, its stupendous monuments, its people, and its one strange river, have been forces that have drawn Greek sages to its schools,

and men of learning of every nation to examine its strange language or temples and tombs. In Egypt, the early march of civilization began. Herodotus and Plato were long at Egypt's ancient seat of learning. Egyptian deities were transplanted under different names into the pantheon of Grecian mythology, and the belief of the future existence of the soul was engrafted into the earlier philosophy and religious creed of the Greeks. Its civilization goes back beyond the era of authentic history, for when it appears on the pages of sacred history the people were not isolated into fighting tribes, but cultivated the soil, had a national unity and a regular government. In the Old Testament it is called Mizraim, and the Land of Ham.* The former is a dual form, and may simply signify the two countries—Upper and Lower Egypt. The Hebrew name Ham may have been given to the country on account of an early immigration of Hamites into it. Or it may be simply the Hebrew form of the hieroglyphic name of Egypt, Kem, which signifies "blackness." The Hebrew word Ham and the hieroglyphic Kem point to common Semitic origin; or the hieroglyphic may, on a very probable hypothesis, be a modification of the Hebrew form; and the numerous and clear relationships between the Hebrew and hieroglyphic languages evidently point to the oneness of the race in their origin. We have only to compare the forms of the personal pronouns and the general principles of the hieroglyphic language to see its close affinity with Hebrew and other Semitic tongues. The termination of feminine nouns and the existence of a dual form, the repetition of nouns to form the superlative, as Neb, Nebu, Lord of lords, are clear and definite principles that enter into the framework of both languages. The true theory is not that in the early history of Egypt the invasion of a dominant Semitic race took

* Ps. cv. 23.

place, and imposed on the conquered Egyptians their language, or the main features of it. The original inhabitants had made considerable progress in civilization before any important invasion took place, and knowing the national pride of the ancient Egyptians, and their hatred for all foreigners, one can scarcely believe they would adopt or retain the language of a foreign race. In Genesis x. the sons of Mizraim, the grandson of Noah, are the Ludim, Ananim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim, Casluhim, Philistim, and Caphtorim. The Ludim were the Lybians, to the west; "The Ananim were the Ami of the monuments, who were dispersed over the Nile valley and gave name to On, Heliopolis; the Naphtuhim were the domain of the Phtah, or people of Memphis; the Pathrusim were the people of the south, or the inhabitants of the Thebaid."* The tribes descended from these ancestors were all fused into one people, speaking the same language, having the same customs and form of government in the north and south country, when they first emerged into the light of history.

The Kharu and Shasu were two races that invaded Egypt at an early date; the former a maritime people, the latter a nomadic race, like the modern Bedouins. The Shasu are usually identified with the shepherd kings, to whom Manetho is supposed to refer, when he says: "God was averse to us, and there came, after a surprising manner, men of ignoble birth out of the eastern parts and had boldness enough to make an expedition into our country, and with ease subdued it by force. This whole nation was styled Hyksos, that is shepherd kings; for the first syllable Hyc, according to the sacred dialect denotes a king, as is Sos, a shepherd." † The nomads of the desert then as well as now, by force of circumstances would be shepherds, moving with their sheep and goats from one wady to another

* Rawl. His. Anc. Egypt, Vol. I. p. 105. † Jos. v. Appion I. 24.

according to the season, as the modern Arabs do. And what is more likely than that those bold, fearless men crowding in upon the eastern part of the delta, and becoming acquainted with its fertility, should at the first opportunity awake and take possession of it? And the shepherd Philiton, of whom Herodotus speaks and to whom the Egyptians of his time ascribed the building of the pyramid of Ghizeh, may be the dim, traditional recollection of the early invasion by the sons of Mizraim or of the later invasion by the desert races, under the general name Shasu. From Manetho's numbers as given in Africanus the Hyksos dominated Egypt for 284 years, when the abundance and luxury of Egypt destroyed the invaders, and their courage and physical prowess were slain in the lap of indolence and vice. A *belli causa* soon arose between Apepi, the last of the Hyksos line, and the king of southern Egypt. Apepi demanded he should worship only Amenka. This was a command only the vilest slave would obey. Ra Sekenen, the victorious, summoned his mighty chiefs and captains for advice. The southern captains of the army defeated the Hyksos, drove them from Avaris, their stronghold, into the desert towards Palestine. The best modern Egyptologists regard it as probable that Apepi made Joseph prime minister, and gave Jacob and his sons the land of Goshen to dwell in. His Semitic origin may, therefore, account for his kindness to Joseph and his father. His adoption of their national religion and customs, and leniency to the all-powerful priesthood, and accommodation to their prejudices about shepherds, betray a foreign ruler anxious to secure the good will of the people. The king who drove out the Hyksos was named Aahmes, "the child of the moon," and was the founder of the eighteenth dynasty. From this period began to reign the native king, who knew not Joseph; and then the Israelites who had rapidly multiplied in Goshen, became slaves of the Egyptian kings as

recorded in Exodus until their final deliverance in the reign of Menephtah of the nineteenth dynasty. The country has been the theatre of war and fanatical cruelties from the days of the Roman Conquest until now. Since 1517, A.D., when it was taken by Sultan Selim, and became part of the Turkish Empire, Egypt has been crushed to the dust. Let us hope that the day of freedom has come at last for that land, and that the predominance of British influence may rescue the patient toiling Fellahîn from the bitter cruelties and extortions of the licentious and hitherto despotic Pashas.

The Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek in Alexandria, 280 B.C. Thus the way was prepared for the introduction of Christianity at a later date. After the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the apostles and disciples were scattered throughout the world, and St. Mark is said to have preached in Alexandria, and until the time of the crusaders the site and part of St. Mark's Church were shown. Christianity had to contend against Grecian and Egyptian paganism, and was also hindered in its progress by the bitter and long hostilities of the leaders of theology in Alexandria. Arius and Athanasius stood fiercely opposed to each other in regard to the person and nature of Christ. Though Arius was condemned and deposed by the Synod of Alexandria, the question was not finally settled until the Council of Chalcedon, 451 A.D. Meanwhile the talent and life of the Church were wasted in attempts to define and settle the belief of the Church. The Gospel was not preached to the heathen, and the converts thought that an orthodox belief in abstract questions, and not faith in Christ as the Saviour, and a holy life, were the chief facts of Christianity. And in the spiritual death of the modern Coptic Church in Egypt, one can see the blighting effects, after fifteen hundred years, of those early times, when orthodoxy, about something which few understood, was regarded as the mark of a Christian and not a holi-

ness of life. It is not, strange, therefore, that paganism held its sway for centuries in Egypt. Until the close of the fourth century, Serapis was the chief deity of Alexandria. "It was confidently affirmed that if any impious hand should dare to violate the majesty of the god, the heavens and earth would instantly return to their original chaos. An intrepid soldier aimed a vigorous stroke against the cheek of Serapis; the thunder was still silent, and both the heavens and the earth continued to preserve their accustomed order and tranquillity; the huge idol was overthrown and broken in pieces. His mangled carcase was burnt in the amphitheatre amidst the shouts of the populace." On the place de Mahommed Ali in Alexandria were situated the chief European shops and the consular offices. This part of the city suffered severely during the bombardment by the British ships of war, and many of its finest buildings were ruined. The bazaars are narrow and paved with round stones, and the shops are boxes from six to ten feet square. The owner sits on the mastaba or elevated bench, in front of his shop, in a lifeless way, and when not doing business enjoys his nargileh or reads the Koran. The Mahommedan is not possessed with a burning desire to sell his goods; there are, therefore, no flaming advertisements in newspapers, in shop windows, or in street circulars. There is but one opening to the shop, which a wooden door in one or two pieces closes; there is no window and no attempt to display goods; and, as the shop-keeper is an invincible fatalist, if Allah wills to send him customers, well, and if not he submits to the inevitable without a murmur.

During my first visit to the bazaars it rained furiously, and as draining and street-cleaning are, in the Oriental mind, works of supererogation, it is plain prose when I say the streets were covered with vegetable and animal refuse. Dogs were prowling about, a degraded, pariah race, without owners, who make

the bazaars their headquarters, and partly do the duty of a scavenger, his horse and cart altogether. They are very useful, but very ugly. Monster camels passed here and there through the narrow streets, and as their feet pressed on the soft mass of rubbish the filthy water squirted on myself and companions as if the branchman of a fire company had turned the nozzle of the hose on us and drenched us. Donkeys, strong, active little fellows, who are the Oriental street car and railway car, the carriage, wheelbarrow and velocipede, all combined, were trotting in all directions at their quick pace, some with baskets of cabbage or oranges slung on each side, or with a sheep's carcase on their back for some hotel or European butcher. Strange scenes are enacted and strange sights seen in the narrow lanes thronged with their motley crowd out of every nation. On the right and left are objects of curiosity; in front and rear is usually a dense mass of human beings, intermingled with dogs, donkeys and camels. Threading my way, trying to escape dangers and see this living panorama, a European carriage drove through the fruit bazaar. It contained some Turkish officials, or some foolish Europeans who at home are nobody, but wished to impress the natives with their assumed importance. Down it came, a hurried stampede was made to the right and left. For safety I pressed into a Mahommedan shop, my guide pressed on me, the crowd of Mahommedans on him, and on the outside of all a donkey pressed on the whole of us. The carriage passed, but skinned the leg of my donkey and the wheel passed over the foot of an Egyptian, who dropped a bundle he was carrying as if it were a ball of fire, squatted on the street under the torrents of rain, lifted his foot with both hands, put the toes of the wounded foot into his mouth and followed the carriage with a scowl on his face and the bitterest Mahommedan curse on his lips. The goldsmiths' bazaar is very narrow, and their shops smallest among the small. They have very little

exposed for sale; their finished jewellery they keep in a bag and that is locked in a wooden box. The style of the work is beautiful, especially that of the Cairo artists, many of whose designs are antique, copied from the figures on the tombs and temples of thirty centuries ago.

The silk bazaar is some feet below the level of the streets, for which it served as a drain. Three or four inches of water were on the floor when I made my first visit, and a stream was rushing down the steps. The rain had washed out the little business-life of the Mahommedan silk merchants and their prospects of business for the day. The shops were closed, and the merchants were enjoying a smoke on the Mastaba, which extended from one end of the bazaar to the other; and to induce a Mahommedan to open his shop after it is shut is about impossible. In his opinion it is the will of Allah that no business should be done, and scarcely mercy or gold will influence him, for, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, he is unchangeable. Among all classes of Orientals it is a work of patience and great labour to induce a shop-keeper to open for life or death when once he has shut and barred his door, and we have only to read the parable in St. Luke* to learn that it has been so in the Orient for centuries.

The antiquities of Alexandria are few. The city has been spoiled of its ancient monuments by the ravages of war and fanaticism, so that even the sites of some of its most famous public buildings cannot be certainly determined, and her fallen granite obelisks, the monuments of old Heliopolis, are placed in the business centres of the metropolis of Britain and the United States. To the south-west of the city, near the site of an ancient Roman circus, stands the so-called Pompey's Pillar on elevated ground. As it was customary to have

* Luke xi. 5-7.

colonnades near places of public amusement, may not this have been one of a colonnade near the stadium? May not the inscription have been put on it as it stood to commemorate the subjection of the city by the Roman Emperor? It is a circular column, a single monument, to tell, in its loneliness and ruin, of the ancient glory of the city. It is ninety-nine feet high, including shaft, base and capital. The capital is weather-beaten, and the base has been mutilated by superstitious hunters for treasure. The inscription records its erection to the honour of Dioclesian after the capture of Alexandria, 296 A.D. The vacant area in which it now stands is strewn with massive granite blocks, pieces of Egyptian gods or kings, whose statues were in the courts and halls of the Serapeum, which stood north of this spot. Some were blocks of sitting, others of standing, figures; some headless, others armless, lying in mud and rubbish, the accumulation of centuries. One block, which may have received the worship of thousands, is now lying at the door of a low drinking-house near the Pillar. To such degraded conditions have heathen gods and the ambitious works of despotic kings come.

A RIDE TO CAIRO.

The distance by rail is about one hundred and thirty miles. The engineers, firemen, and conductors on the trains are usually Europeans, the brakemen are Egyptians. At first the natives looked askance at the innovation of locomotives, and many amusing stories are told of their terror. Now, however, they take kindly to this comfortable and quick way of travel; but if we point to the railway as an evidence of the superior wisdom and enterprise of the Infidels, a Mahommedan will admit it is good, but will say, this is the wisdom the devil gives, whereas their knowledge is from

Allah. Along the line of railway village after village is passed, and the deepest poverty prevails among the people. The houses are built without order; there are no regular streets, and even in Cairo no names to the streets, with few exceptions. Each man seems to have placed his house where his fancy led him, regardless of order. In going through a Fellahîn village, a traveller is continually turning sharp corners, climbing over heaps of rubbish that lie before every house, and must continually guard himself from the attack of starved, vicious curs. The square mud huts are roofed over with reeds and palm branches, and the roof is usually occupied by broken water-jars, old household utensils, together with a dog and some domestic fowl. Some of the better class of houses have an elevation about four or five feet square and the same in height. A stranger at first might think the owner intended to erect a diminutive steeple on his house, but his ambition failing, or his funds, he contented himself, like some church committees, with a small tower, and covered it over. These are pigeon-cots, and when the Egyptian has finished his house and tower, he never thinks of them again until they begin to tumble down about his head. Like other Mahommedans, they will erect a new structure occasionally, but they will endure with pleasure, heat or cold, or storm or sickness, rather than even repair their house. Many of the villages were situated on low ground, and pools of water or heaps of rubbish blocked the entrance to the doors, while their graveyards were on high ground. Like their ancestors, they spend more money and labour on their graves than on their houses; and the whitish limestone of the tombs outside the villages give a neat appearance to the place of the dead, which is not seen in the houses of the living. They seem to bury their dead in healthy places and build their villages in low situations that breed fever and pestilence. On the roofs or

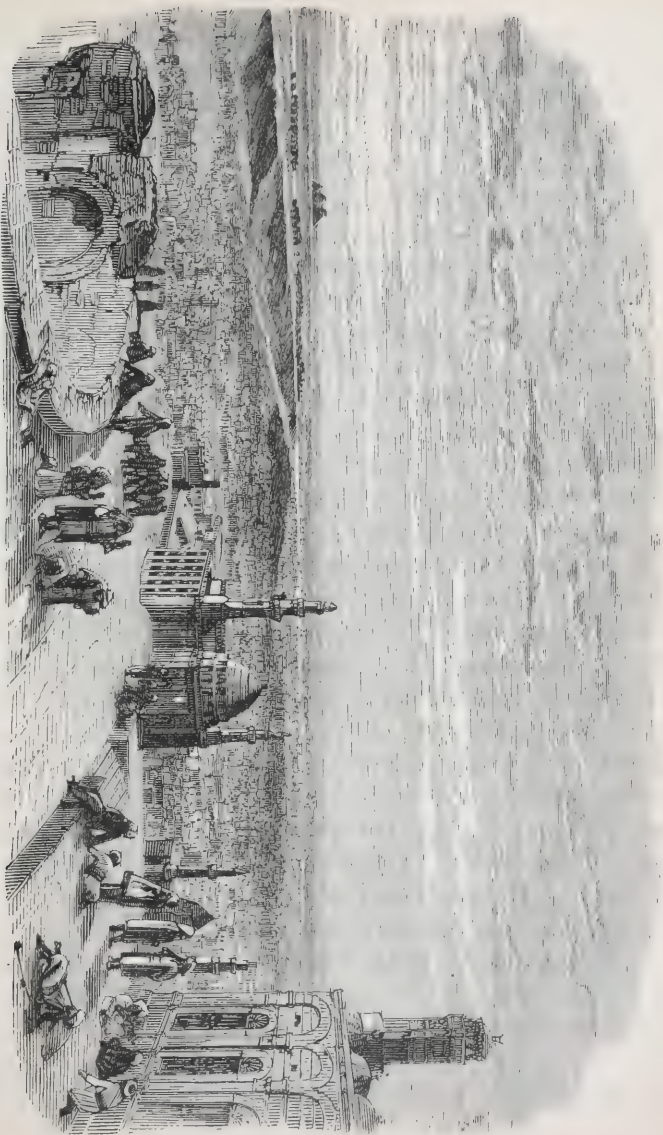
along the sunny side of the house the men were basking in the sun like crocodiles, while the women were trudging with water-jars on their head for household purposes, or were busy in the most degraded manual work.

Tantah is a populous town about half way between Alexandria and Cairo. It has been famous for its Mahommedan festivities held there just prior to the time of the annual cutting of the canals. From all parts of the Delta the people came, but in recent times the enthusiasm is dying, and fewer Egyptians make the annual pilgrimage. At Tantah some of the most cold-blooded murders were committed during the British invasion of 1882. Europeans were placed by the fanatical citizens on the railway track, and the engine driven backward and forward over their mangled corpses. Others were disembowelled and treated with the most horrid cruelties until death rescued them from their barbarous murderers. The platform was crowded with Fellahîn, some coming on board, others curiously watching the European passengers. Boys with the scantiest of garments, and girls adorned with conspicuous ornaments round their heads, on their wrists and ankles, and in their nose, were selling bread, oranges and water. The bread of Egypt cannot be called the staff, but the ring, of life. It is usually made in rings, five or six inches in diameter, into which the boys thrust their arms and so sell their arms of bread. Arabic, Italian, German, French, English, were spoken on that small platform; and turbans, and gowns with flashy colours were intermingled with Balmoral bonnets, felt hats and tweeds from Canada, and the United States. In a few moments the train started, and Tantah with its tall minarets was soon out of sight.

At Yalioub, the station before reaching Cairo, I saw the famous Pyramid of Ghizeh, far away to the right. Masses of white clouds were piled up like mountains of purest snow.

The blue sky appeared through clefts in the clouds, and the lofty pyramid-top seemed to reach up to the very heaven. In a few moments after leaving Yalioub, Cairo is reached. A throng that might have resembled the builders of Babel after their language had been confounded stood outside, ready to lay violent hands on the small baggage of travellers. On emerging from the station a fierce onset was made, and a dozen black hands took hold of my valise. Their services were not required, but to expostulate was only to expose myself to a fiercer attack, and to threaten was equally vain. Defence of self and property is an axiom for clergymen as well as others, so I put one Egyptian in a moment *hors de combat*. As the gap however was quickly filled by another, blows had to be rapid as well as effective, after the manner of the Gatling gun. When I had made an opening sufficiently large I escaped, feeling as proud of my victory over the fallen Mahommedan foes as the British at Tel-el-Kebir. On looking back I saw a few unfortunates who were blockaded by a circle of the enemy, and rescued only by the friendly aid of the Khedive's policemen, who made heavy and effective applications of a cudgel to their backs.

The names over the shops were in Arabic, Armenian, Italian, Greek, German, French and English. One would at first imagine that all the nations on the earth were doing business in Cairo, yet in its customs, streets and language it is a typical Oriental city. The Hotel Du Nil, in which I lodged, stood a short distance off the Moskee. A narrow street leads to it, the houses on each side of which almost meet at the upper stories. Over the shop doors were stuffed crocodiles and other strange creatures either for signs or for sale. There was no order in the structure of the ancient cities of Egypt, and there is none in the modern cities. Streets wind in every way like cork-screws, and the houses are built in any spot



CITY OF CAIRO, EGYPT.

most convenient, without the least regard to appearance or regularity. The buildings of Hotel Du Nil form a quadrangle; in the centre are Oriental trees and shrubs, which give a picturesque appearance to the place. The proprietor was a German, who was a living and moving polyglot, for as he walked about among his guests he could converse with equal fluency and urbanity in half a dozen tongues. Among those whose acquaintance I made was a talkative Scotchman, who sat next me at table. He was a civil engineer, and had come out on business in connection with the Suez Canal. Among the plans which he thought would throw such a flood of light on the historic truth of the Bible as would silence a multitude of babbling opponents whose tongues are mightier than their brains, was that the Gulf of Suez should be dredged. I asked how the money could be obtained. "Let scholars, for the sake of truth and the Christian Churches of Europe and America, provide the means," he replied. But suppose the Israelites crossed south of Suez, would not thirty-four or five hundred years have destroyed the metal wheels in the sea? He seemed to think that the deposit brought in by the tide would have covered them and perhaps spared them. He was determined however to stir the Church in Scotland on that subject. The waiters were Egyptians, who often gave the Arabic name for the food which they supplied. One kind of food, the name of which sounded somewhat like gimlets, Sandy did not wish. A few moments afterwards he changed his mind. "Ho there, waiter," shouted Sandy to the Egyptian servant, who was leaning against the wall at the opposite side of the room, "bring me some gimlets." The waiter hurried to him and leaned slightly forward to hear him. "Gimlets, let me have some of your gimlets." "Gibliks, gibliks," repeated the Egyptian to himself. Then turning to my neighbour said, "Ma feesh gibliks"—there are no gibliks.

"Let me have some gimlets," reiterated Sandy impatiently. The Egyptian, with a puzzled look, hastened to the proprietor, and consulted about the "gibliks." In a minute he returned smiling with a savoury dish of vegetables and meat, which the Scotchman declared to be superior, in his opinion, to porridge, brose, or haggis.



CHAPTER VI.

THE PYRAMID OF GHIZEH.

“The pyramid, which occupied twenty years in building, is quadrangular. The stones are polished, and fitted in the most exact manner, and none of them is less than thirty feet in length.”—*Herod.*, bk. ii., s. 5.



GHIZEH and its companion pyramids are on the edge of the Libyan desert, and due west of old Cairo. The journey may be made in three methods—in a European carriage, on a donkey, or on foot. The first is convenient when a party or family is going, but is expensive, for the owner must be paid, and the driver expects a handsome bukshish; and besides, you are expected to pay for display in the shape of a runner, who is dressed in a short white skirt, over which is a jacket embroidered with gold and silver thread. He wears a turban of spotless whiteness, and carries a rod in his hand, which he applies with equal fervour to the back of a donkey or the head of an Egyptian, who may be in the way. Walking is a pleasurable exercise when the roads are good and the weather cool and bracing. In Egypt it requires some degree of courage, however, to travel on foot to the pyramids, for beggars will swarm round like ants out of the earth, or like frogs after a thunderstorm, and will pursue the enemy until he is worried and yields to his tormentor. Besides, the fact of walking settles the social status of the traveller in the Egyptian brain; they set him down as among the Fellahîn of

his own country, and their begging, therefore, assumes the form of insolence. Dress, and the mode of visiting the pyramids, determine one's standing in the social catalogue of the Arabs at Ghizeh, and of the Egyptian common people. The journey is usually made on the back of a donkey. This method is a novelty to most, is reasonable as to cost, and is most convenient. To make a pleasant and successful journey, careful attention to certain preliminaries is needed. There are small and smaller donkeys, and, as Mark Twain has remarked, one has only to open his legs and let the motive power back into position, and when seated, the rule is, hold the bridle loosely, and stretch the feet forward and outward in the stirrups. If the traveller has a conscience and weighs over two hundred pounds, he will almost certainly choose the largest donkey he can find, and a small boy to drive. Experience taught me that small donkeys were by far the best travellers, as a rule. The larger ones are usually hard riders, and lazy beyond measure, the result of which is, one goes at a snail's pace. Here and there spurts are made by the application of the donkey boy's rod, in the rear. This spurt begins by a sudden jerk, which strains the rider's neck, compels him to bite his tongue, and then, as a final exercise, makes him perform a revolution backward in the dust. The larger donkey is not a smooth rider usually, his back rises and falls rapidly, and the rider is taking a downward motion when the donkey is taking an upward one. In agony he will dismount, motion to the boy driver to mount, which he does in a moment from behind. He jumps on his back after the manner of boys playing leap-frog, only instead of leaping beyond the animal's head he alights on the saddle, smiles, and grunts a stave of an Arabic song, while the vanquished European trudges on foot. It requires experience, therefore, to make a good selection. Let those with gay bridle and saddle be shunned, for, like

some men who are gaily decorated by the tailor's art and ornaments of gold, their harness is the best of them. If the one chosen has a cunning eye, he will plot mischief, and when the rider is turning a corner at full speed, and is confident he will clear the stone wall, the brute will make a sudden turn to the right or left, and, calculating distance to a nicety, will bring the rider's leg violently against the wall, to the serious damage of his nether garments and his own composure. If by chance the donkey fails in this, he will drive him against a tree, or an Egyptian, or, as a *dernier resort* to gratify his innate wickedness, against another donkey. My selection was made the night previous to my visit, and in company with two Germans, I left Cairo at two o'clock a.m. Darkness, that might be felt, was over the land. We rode down the Moskee to the Esbekiyeh gardens, then turning to the left, drove in silence as if in a city of the dead. At long intervals a watchman was walking sleepily along his beat; not a voice broke the stillness, for the time and the strangeness of the scene forced us to think, not speak. The guards at each end of the Nile bridge scanned us carefully, then allowed us to pass. Our route lay parallel with the Nile for a short distance, then extended westward to the Pyramids. The road is lined with Acacia trees, whose branches almost meet overhead, and form a grateful shade from the prostrating heat. For us, they intensified the darkness of the early morning. As we intended to devote the day pyramidizing, we had brought a basket of provisions, which was fastened to the saddle of the largest donkey, on which also sat one of my German companions, of vast dimensions. Occasionally we broke into a trot, as our desire was to see the sun rise from the top of the pyramid. During one of these special efforts, the saddle girth slipped, the German slipped, the basket fell, the donkey also, and all rolled together in Egyptian dust and

darkness. Coffee bottles were broken, oranges, meat and bread were soaked with their contents. My German friend had one pocket full of pottery pipes, purchased the day before in the bazaar, and as he had fallen upon them, they were broken into fragments, and as he held up a handful to me, he said, "Egyptian ruins." Matters were righted as well and speedily as possible. In the distance some strange object came in view on the road before us. It seemed as if the side of a house on legs was approaching; in a few moments the moving mass came near, when we discovered it to be a monster camel, laden with green clover for the Cairo markets. Behind the leader was another and another, the tail of the one fastened to the bridle of the other, and so a long line continued to pass. We had buoyed ourselves up with hopes, that were ruthlessly shattered, that our early start would save us from the demands for bukshish from the youths of Ghizeh. They seem gifted with an extra sense, the power of smelling infidels, for two miles before we reached the pyramid, that awful word, that strikes terror into the hearts of timid travellers, was heard, but whether spoken by a boy or girl I could not say. I asked the name of the beggar, the voice answered out of the darkness, "Ismail." In a few moments, however, Ismail was only one of a score, running in the van and rear, on our right and left, and thus we were escorted on our first visit to the Pyramid of Ghizeh. The Sheikh of Ghizeh had been informed of our coming, and was waiting to meet us. I had been authorized to use the name of Dr. Watson, of the Presbyterian Mission. I told him I was Dr. Watson's friend; he replied, I am glad, for Dr. Watson is the Arab's friend also. Before ascending let us try to comprehend the magnitude of that mountain of stone. Its height is estimated at from 480 to 485 feet. The length of its side, including the original casing, was 764 feet, its area covers

thirteen acres, one rood and twenty-two poles. It contains 89,000,000 cubic feet, and its weight is computed to be 6,848,000 tons. The basement stones are many of them thirty feet long and nearly five feet high.* In order to appreciate its greatness we must withdraw ourselves to some distance, then slowly approach it, and the closer we come to it, the more its stupendous size stands out in contrast with ourselves, on a horse, or one of the clay huts of Ghizeh. Let us climb up a few tiers, walk along the whole face of the Pyramid, and slowly we grasp the magnitude, then we will realize that for massiveness this is the king of human structures reared by human hands. Two Arabs were allotted to one of my companions, the other declining to ascend, and two to myself. The first tier reached almost to my chin, the Arab guides leeches themselves, one to each of my wrists, shouted, gave a sudden lift, I made a bound from the earth and stood on the first pier of the famous Pyramid. I put forth considerable effort, and the perspiration began to flow; in proportion as I increased my effort the Arabs relaxed theirs. For the remainder of the journey they had to work harder and the ascent was easier for me.

At the north-east corner, about three-fourths of the distance from the base, the stones are broken and we found a safe resting place. There we halted, and in the light preceding sunrise could see the Arabs gathering at the base like bronzed Liliputians. The guides began to pour out their guttural Arabic, the burden of which was "you big man, you give big bukshish." To divert their thoughts into a different channel, I started for the top, and after a quick, final effort reached the summit. The Arabs gave a shout and clapped their hands in high glee; for a few moments I rested, and then looked afar over the land of Egypt from that colossal pillar.

* Rawlinson's *Anc. E.*, Vol. I., p. 204.

To the east, beyond the Nile, the sun was rising, as if out of Arabia; his golden edge was just appearing above the horizon; in a few moments the minarets of the mosque of Mahommed Ali in the citadel, and the whole city of graceful spires and huge domes were bathed in the golden light of the morning. Masses of what seemed dense blackness stretching along the Nile valley were changed into fields of the deepest green, and the common sand of the desert, as if by magic, glittered like gems fit for a prince's crown. Westward stretched the desert, lifeless and uninhabited. North-east of Cairo is Tel-el-Yahoudiyeh, where stood a Jewish temple in the times of the Ptolemies, and beyond is Tel-Bubastis, the site of Pi-Beseth of the Bible, and beyond is Tel-el-Kebir, which was entrenched and fortified by 30,000 Egyptians and taken by the British after a hard night's march. And as the kilted Highlanders and Laneers mowed down the foe like grass before the reaper, the world saw that there were as skilful generals to command Britain's armies, and as bold Scotchmen, and loyal Irishmen and fearless Englishmen to fight Britain's battles and win victories, as any in the days of her proudest military achievements. To the south is the site of ancient Memphis, once among the famous capitals of Egypt, now almost effaced from the earth, whose very foundations are destroyed, and over which clover and wheat fields are flourishing. Near this Pyramid of Ghizeh are the two others of vast dimensions and of great age. Between the first and second pyramid, only nearer the Nile, crouches the Sphinx, the silent witness of the centuries of war and slavery, of rising and falling dynasties that governed this strange land. Smaller pyramids, temples and tombs are clustering in ruins around the base of this mighty structure. The whole scene was beautiful beyond description. That land on which every traveller gazes from the summit of the pyramid was the cradle of the race. In

those old cities now almost wiped from the face of the earth warrior kings tyrannized, and myriads spent their life in the degrading chains of slavery. Kings have reared world-enduring monuments and tombs, but their name has perished and their power gone. From no spot twenty-four feet square can one see an area so full of the hoary ruins of a great people, who strove to discover the facts and solve the mysteries of the universe, and to reach to the knowledge of that great God whom man acknowledges in some form to be the author of all things, and whom the Christian knows to be the helper of the race in all its terrible struggles and need.

The descent from the pyramid was easier than the ascent. The guides preceded and leaped or scrambled from tier to tier. I followed with some alarm at first, as I looked down the great depth to the base. But one soon becomes fearless in going down the face of the pyramid, and a sure step and a good eye will ensure safety. A third Arab came behind, and unrolling the white muslin of his turban began to tie it round my body, while he would hold the ends behind, and so add to my safety. I declined his aid with thanks; buckshish was looming up before him and he was very desirous of employment. "If the Howadjah is killed," he replied, "what will the Khedive do to me?" I asked what will he do? "He will do this," and he drew his finger across his neck, the modern hieroglyph for "he will cut off my head." As I did not wish him to run such a risk, I threatened him, and mixed it with persuasion and escaped further trouble. If the Arabs were to be classified by their eager curiosity they might be first cousins of the Scotch. My guides kept up a steady battery of questions as to my country and object in visiting the pyramid. The younger of the two began in broken English, mixed with Arabic, "What country you?" I said what country the other howadjah? "He German," but "what country you? you Swiss? you Amelican?"

you Frank? you Scotch?" Meanwhile I had not replied, but as we were nearing the bottom, I asked "quid dicis?" which he took to be the name of my country. "Quoi doishis, quoi doishis. No howadjah ever came to Ghizeh from Quoi doishis before. Where is quoi doishis? Has quoi doishes a sultan, a khedive, a pasha?" As we reached the crowd at the base, a number of the brown citizens of Ghizeh village gathered, round, and above every other sound was heard, "quoi doishis," as they discussed this new geographical problem and tried to localize this strange country.

On reaching the entrance on the north side, about fifty feet from the base, we rested a few minutes and refreshed ourselves with coffee, from very diminutive cups. Soon our guides were ready, and having stripped off our coats, and with wire, candles, and matches in our hands, we begin to enter this awful mass of solid stone. One guide enters first, the writer followed, then the German, followed by his countryman, who had meanwhile plucked up courage, and a second guide brings up the rear. At the entrance are arch stones to relieve the mass above. The tunnel we entered is polished like glass, by the descent of vast multitudes in the past centuries. In height it varies from three to four feet, and from two feet nine inches to three feet six inches in breadth. This passage descends to a chamber almost beneath the apex, underneath the limestone foundation. We crawled through the gloom and dust for about sixty-three feet, at which point another passage begins to ascend at the same angle. A huge granite stone blocks up the entrance, we make a *detour*, therefore, to the right, and then climbing over a barrier, four feet high, we returned to the direct line, and, after considerable slipping and bruising of limbs, reached the entrance to the Grand Gallery, at a distance of one hundred and twenty-four feet. On the right, at the entrance to the gallery is an

opening that unites with the entrance passage. One of the guides went down sixty feet, planting his feet into small cavities in the sides, and uttered some Arabic for our special delectation, the echo of which seemed to come from the bowels of the earth. The Grand Gallery is one hundred and fifty feet in length, five feet two inches wide at the bottom, and gradually contracts to about four feet at the top. It is composed of seven layers of stone, the upper one projecting a little beyond the lower one. A short passage, through which we went on hands and knees joins the gallery with the king's chamber, which is composed of beautifully polished granite, its roof consists of nine enormous blocks of granite nineteen feet long. At the west side stands the lidless sarcophagus, seven feet four inches long, three feet one inch high and three feet broad. When struck it rings like bell metal, its sides are much defaced, and in a few years it will be entirely gone in travellers' pockets, unless the Egyptian Government protects its antiquities. This, together with the walls, have been highly polished, which alone is evidence of the mechanical skill of those early builders. At the foot of the Grand Gallery we proceeded along a horizontal passage, one hundred and ten feet in length, and reached the so-called Queen's Chamber, the roof of which is composed of sloping blocks of granite in the form of an arch. The heat became intense, the darkness was like that of the night of Egypt's doom.

In company with one of my companions, an intelligent man, I measured the chambers and passages, and examined them as well as time would permit. Our guides were anxious to return to daylight and fresh air, and threatened to leave us unless we hastened, but a little firmness extinguished the incipient rebellion. The feet of the Arabs are callous by their steady travel over the sand and stones of the desert. For weeks some of my own hired men went through Arabia with the thinnest

sandals and often barefooted. Though the soles may be hard, I discovered the upper part is as sensitive as a Canadian's. In stepping down at one point I alighted accidentally upon my poor guide's toes; two hundred weight falling four feet upon an Arab's toes made an impression. He danced a jig on one foot, while he held the other in the air with both hands, and put his toes in his mouth, and went through a long pantomime in the passage. The scene was novel in the extreme; the place of the dance was the pyramid, the chief actor, a wounded Arab, the dance was on one foot, amid flying clouds of fine dust that nearly choked the spectators, a Scotchman and two Germans, while the dull glare of the candles in our hands reflected their light on a black, wizened face twisted into all kinds of shapes. The scene at length ended, the procession was formed; in the distance a speck of light began to appear; it grew larger at every step, and finally we emerged into daylight, covered with a coating of fine dust, perchance of the dead, driven in from the desert in the centuries. Coffee was again handed us by some towzy-headed youths from the modern, mud-walled village of Ghizeh. We paid the Sheik, who smiled benevolently when the money touched his rough palm, and we also dealt liberally with our guides. As usual they were dissatisfied, and said "Howadjah, heavy man, heavy pull, one Napoleon." I tried to persuade, but it was wasted labour. At length, when I thought the matter ended, one Arab in doleful tones shouted "toes, toes," and went through the pantomime once more. So for his toes' sake he received a bukshish. The old Sheik, who professed to defend us from the rapacity of his men, forgot his word and his dignity; like a hungry dog longing for another dog's bone, he could not look calmly on the distribution of francs, and begged for even half-a-one to drink tobacco. In good nature we yielded, and then parted in true oriental fashion from the venerable Sheik, and the wizened sharks of Ghizeh.

A few yards west of the great pyramid are a number of small buildings that may have been temples, or perhaps tombs of some royal persons of inferior position, or of the priests that in remote ages made this a centre of religious worship. Into the tomb of Lepsius we crawled; the opening was almost blocked with sand driven from the desert. It is a square building, flat roofed and on the whole well preserved, for it has been uncovered only in recent times. The first chamber has been so blackened by the smoke of torches that the figures on the wall are almost obliterated. At the north-west corner of this chamber is a small opening into another smaller chamber and thence into a third. The sand was drifted high against the walls, but we diligently removed this with our hands for a depth of two feet, and were rewarded by a good view of the scenes of daily Egyptian life, oxen ploughing and threshing out the grain. The colouring of the objects was as fresh as when it left the painter's brush.

Three minutes' walk brought us to the colossal Sphinx, with a human head and the body of a lion, symbol of wisdom and physical power. The body, hewn out of the limestone, is one hundred and forty-three feet long, the circumference of the head is one hundred and two feet. The fore feet projected seventeen yards beyond the body, and between them stood an altar, on which sacrifice was offered. There have been no means of determining its date, no hieroglyphs have been discovered on any part of it, its age is, therefore, a matter of conjecture. The features, though defaced, are Ethiopian; the face is round and the lips full, and faint traces of colouring are yet visible on the lower part of the cheek and near the ears. Though the face cannot be called beautiful according to European ideas, there is a calm, dignified appearance, which, together with the massiveness of the head and body, fixes the attention of every traveller. The temple of the Sphinx

stands a few yards to the south-east, and is supposed to have been erected by Shafra, or Cephren, the builder of the second pyramid; hence if the temple were devoted to the worship of the Sphinx, the latter must have been erected prior to the time of Cephren. Besides, it is well known that the oldest monuments of Egypt are without hieroglyphics, the absence of them, therefore, from both the temple and the Sphinx would indicate a great antiquity. May it not symbolize both



THE SPHINX.

the king and the kingdom of Egypt? The king was the supposed fountain of wisdom, and he was the source of power. In those times he was an independent despot, the life and wealth and time of whose subjects were under his control, and we have only to look at the cartouches in Egypt and Arabia to see that the kings of Egypt boasted of their physical power. Egypt, likewise, was the kingdom, *par excellence*, in power and

wisdom. As the symbol of the king and the kingdom it received worship, and in return guarded the sacred places and the country from foreign enemies. For more than forty centuries that strange monster has looked over the rich delta; it has seen dynasty after dynasty rise and fall; it has received oblations at the hands of heathen priests whose name and race have perished; it has witnessed the thousands of poor slaves eating their garlic and coarse bread, and their crushing toil in rearing those great pyramids and tombs, behind and around it; it has seen Egypt in its glory, when its name was famous in all the east, and it has gazed on Egypt plundered and its people crushed under foreign kings, and one looks with reverence on that face pensive and sad for Egypt, fallen from its ancient greatness to weakness and misery. Before leaving this spot on the edge of the desert, every traveller is prompted to ask himself or others who made this great pyramid of Ghizeh and what was its object? Its age is more or less uncertain, and the number of theories regarding its object is legion. When a theory is once adopted, who cannot find proofs or forge them in defence of his cause? The pyramid of Ghizeh is generally supposed to have been built 2,000 or 2,200 B.C. Above the sarcophagus chamber are four small chambers, on the stones of which have been discovered hieroglyphs in red ochre. These were the

names Khufu, and Khnum Kufu



and



In the fourth dynasty one of the kings in Manetho's list is Khufu, and he seems to reign conjointly with Nu Khufu or Shufu, who may have been the son of Khufu or his brother as

Herodotus asserts, who says, "on Cheop's death his brother Chephren ascended the throne." In an inscription of the fourth dynasty we read, "Khufu built his pyramid near the temple of Hest, near the house of the Sphinx." * It is probable, therefore, he was the builder of the Ghizeh pyramid, for the other pyramids contained the names of later kings who probably built them. According, therefore, to the usual dates given to the fourth dynasty, the pyramid of Ghizeh must have been erected about 2,400 B.C.

Some have tried to identify Khufu with Joseph of Bible history, who, when famine was in the land, during the seven years employed the Egyptians on this public work as a modern government might do, to give work and bread to a part of the population in distress. It is impossible to trace the two names to a common root, their similarity is in sound, not in origin or structure. Besides, this theory would bring the date of the pyramid some centuries later than that usually accepted; nor is the theory that the Israelites during the time of their bondage built it, tenable, for according to the Bible evidence, "their lives were bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick and in all manner of service in the field."† The age was a practical one for Egypt; then some of the fresh water canals were dug; in this work and in irrigating the fields the Hebrews would be employed. It is probable enough they may have made the sun-dried bricks, and even built the brick pyramid of Dashoor or the one in the Fayoum, but evidence is wanting to prove they piled up the massive stones of the pyramid of Ghizeh.

It has been thought Ghizeh was a tomb, or a temple devoted to the worship of the sun-god, or an astronomical observatory, or a barrier to keep back the sands of the Libyan Desert, or a

* S. Birch, LL.D., *Egyptian Texts*, p. 5. † Exodus i. 14.

revelation in stone of important cosmical and theological truth. The facts as to the size and angles given by the advocates of the last theory are correct, but their conclusions are false. It is true the pyramid of Ghizeh is built on certain mathematical principles, but that it is therefore a revelation of the history of the world or theological truth is not even shown to be a probability. It is asserted to have been made according to a divine model and, though the first and oldest in Egypt, is the only perfect one. What evidence have we that its form was a revelation to the early builder? A statement of Herodotus says they commonly called "the two pyramids by the name of the shepherd Philiton, who at that time fed his herds in that region."* According to Piazzzi Smyth, this was Melchizedek, who exercised over Cheops a supernatural influence. This is assumption without evidence. Moreover, if the pyramid of Cheops is a revelation of a divine message, so must the second pyramid be, for both of them were called by the name of Philiton. Herodotus tells us the Egyptian people were wretched during the reigns of Cheops and Chephren, and after their death refused to call the pyramids by their name. But if Philiton prevailed on the kings to close the temples and build this pyramid, would they have been so pleased with him as to have named the pyramids after him? If it be a revelation of truth of any kind essential to the welfare of men, according to the theories of Taylor, Prof. Smyth and Dr. Seiss, there are immense difficulties in the way. (1) Why has it been kept a secret for more than four thousand years? (2) If it be a revelation of the history of the world, its duration and the certain destiny of the race, it reveals more than the New Testament, and therefore the New Testament is so far an inferior revelation, and the builder of the pyramid knew more than Christ or the angels, for they

* Herod., b. ii., sect. 5.

were ignorant of the end of the world. (3) It is an imperfect revelation, for twenty or thirty feet of its apex is destroyed, its outer casing is removed and its sides are badly weather-eaten. How, then, can it supply a unit of measurement and determine the diameter of the earth?

After having quoted Lepsius, Smyth and others, in support of the theory that it is the only original and perfect pyramid, and that the other sixty or seventy along the Nile were mere bungling imitations of the Great Pyramid, Dr. Seiss says: "The Great Pyramid suddenly takes its place in the world in all its matchless magnificence, without father, without mother, and as clear apart from all evolution as if it had dropped down from the unknown heavens. In all countries there is a gradual advance from a less perfect to a more complete, but here all ordinary laws are reversed."* The date of the Great Pyramid is uncertain, and it is, therefore, building a theory on fog to assert, with such confidence, it was built prior to all the others. It is true it covers a larger area than the others, and that its massive, polished blocks of granite in the interior chambers stand as closely fitted as when placed there and have defied the centuries, but there is evidence that the Great Pyramid is not the oldest. It has been, as a style of architecture, subject to laws of development, and; if this be true, the theory that it burst upon the world's history as a perfect structure to reveal the truth, otherwise unknown, becomes a dream. Birch, one of the best Egyptologists, believes the pyramid of Sakkara is older than the Great Pyramid. He dates it in the reign of a king of the first dynasty of Manetho's list.† Lenormant places it in the age of the second Manethonean dynasty,‡ while that of Ghizeh is generally assigned to the fourth dynasty. The Sakkara pyra-

* A Miracle in Stone, pp. 39, 40. † Egypt from the Earliest Times, p. 25.

‡ Manual of Ancient History, Vol. I., p. 332.

mid is in a more ruinous condition than that of Ghizeh; both are constructed of lime-stone, they have been exposed to the same weather influence, and there is no account of Sakkara being destroyed by foreign invaders, so that, except on the ground of greater antiquity, it would be difficult to account for its broken-down condition. Its blocks are crumbling to dust, and massive stones are scattered over the desert at its base, while even the oldest of the Ghizeh pyramids is comparatively perfect.

Around the pyramids of Ghizeh are a number of low, square buildings, whose walls are of immense thickness, and many of them are almost covered with sand drifted from the desert. Some of them are flat-roofed, others are like low pyramids. Externally they are plain, without hieroglyphs or decorations, while internally the walls are painted with scenes of daily life and of a semi-religious character. Are these tombs or temples, or both? No one can tell. The probability is they were tombs. May not these be among the earliest efforts of pyramid building? "It is not improbable that some of the smaller, unpretentious tombs are earlier than any of the pyramidal ones."* From them it was a considerable advance to construct the pyramid of Meydoun with three stages, and then that of Sakkara with six stages, with a chamber in the rock beneath its apex. Then it was a question of time and taste and expenditure whether six or sixty tiers should be erected and that there should be chambers in the pyramids as well as under them. May not these, therefore, be the missing links of the chain of development in pyramid building, whose last and perfect link is found at Ghizeh?

Let us suppose the race almost destroyed by some universal epidemic or earthquake except a tribe in Central Africa,

* Rawlinson's *Anc. History of Egypt*, Vol. I., p. 189.

and at the end of 4,000 years they should migrate west to Europe, and, among the ruins of London, found a perfect locomotive. They searched, and could not find the first locomotive Stephenson built, or the kettle that gave Watts his first idea of utilizing the force of steam: would that be a valid argument in support of a theory that heaven had revealed to the Saxon mechanics the knowledge of constructing a perfect locomotive, and the means of using steam for purposes of commerce or travel? Or, if the diameter of the driving wheels, or the stroke of the piston rod happened to be so many fives or tens, would that be a solid basis on which to build theories of the world or theology. The loss of Franklin's kite would not prove the divine origin of telegraphy, nor the loss of the first steam engine prove the modern locomotive to be a divine revelation. So, even if the absence of the first pyramids were a fact, it would not, in any way, warrant the conclusion that there was none prior to it, and therefore the Great Pyramid was a divine revelation.

It is asserted a system of fives and tens is an element of revelation in this structure, and through this revelation certain cosmical facts are taught which otherwise are only approximately known. Let us see what the evidence for such a system is. "It has five corners—four at the base, and one unique corner at the summit,"* and this is supposed to exist all through the pyramid, but, as a matter of fact, the apex of the pyramid is gone, and a level area twenty-four feet square remains, so that there are eight corners instead of five. It is not sufficient to say in its original form it terminated in a point, for it is therefore a defective revelation, and the second and third pyramids of Ghizeh are more perfect in this respect. An assumed derivation of the pyramid is the foundation on which

*A Miracle in Stone, p. 45.

the system of ten rests. Seiss says: "It is a mongrel derivation. The ancient Coptic 'pyr,' division, is joined with the hieroglyphic word 'met'—ten, and so it teaches a 'division of ten' as an element in its structure and in nature. But is it not equally a valid argument to derive it from pyr, and mat, mother; and so it would signify the mother of division, or per, a house, and mat, a mother, and regard it as the house or temple of the female divinity worshipped by the early Egyptians? This theory of numbers does service in computing the sun's distance from the earth. The vertical height of the pyramid multiplied by ten to the ninth power gives the mean distance as 91,840,000 miles; but these figures differ by some millions from the most recent calculations. Besides, one of the factors in this problem is uncertain, and so therefore must the conclusion be. There is a difference of at least five feet in the various computations, depending on the base from which the measurement is made, and the thickness and angle of the casing stone, the latter of which must always remain uncertain. The difference in the calculations is sufficient to destroy the theory and its conclusions, for, if a revelation, it ought to be a perfect one, and its truth certain. Mathematical truth and high intellectuality are declared to be found alone in the Great Pyramid. The builders, we are told, aimed at constructing a pyramid, each face of which would be an equilateral triangle; but the second is nearer an equilateral triangle than the first, for there is only a difference of one-twentieth between the base and the sloping sides, while the difference in the first is one-nineteenth; and whatever trinity the pyramid may be supposed to teach in this triangular form is taught more perfectly by the second than the first. In respect to Orientation the Great Pyramid teaches nothing more than many others do."* "The Sakkara

* Vide Seiss, p. 46.

pyramid is the only one in Egypt, the sides of which do not exactly face the cardinal points; "therefore true Orientation belongs to all the pyramids, with that exception, and the Great Pyramid teaches no independent truth by this, and indicates no superiority. The Great Pyramid stands on a lower level than the second pyramid, and though it is much higher, yet its apex was actually six feet six inches lower; and therefore if any theological symbolism can be extracted from the situation of the pyramids it is in favour of the second.

Sir John Herschell computed that, in 2170 B.C., (*a*) Draconis, in the constellation of the Dragon, was in line with the entrance, and a theory of time and theology is at once constructed. The descending passage represents the world's march, under Satan's influence, down to perdition, symbolized by the chamber under the pyramid. God interfered, and the world began to ascend in moral truth. This is signified by the ascending gallery, which denotes the Jewish Church. Serious difficulties meet this strange theory. Without proof, an inch represents a year. The downward gallery, Dr. Seiss says, is 1,000 inches, which represent 1000 years, and the ascending one from the exodus to Christ, 1542 inches or years, making a total of 2542 years from creation till Christ, which conflicts with all systems of chronology. To avoid this, he assumes the entrance to denote the downward march of the race after the flood; but the race began a downward career from Eden, hence it should mark time from the beginning; otherwise the theory is conjecture, not fact. Besides, there is such a margin of difference in the computations as to prove the theory useless. Dr. Seiss makes the descending gallery 1000 inches, Rawlinson, 756; Seiss makes the ascending one 1542, Rawlinson, 1488, a difference in one gallery, or epoch of world history of 244 inches or years. Dr.

Seiss and others make the Grand Gallery represent the Christian dispensation, 1814 inches or years, and the horizontal passage denotes the period of judgment. Facts prove the falsity of all this theorizing, for the Church has in no sense finished her career. She is in no sense in a time of judgment since 1814, as she ought to be, according to those whose views we have been examining. Her sacrifices are more than for long centuries before, in the way of personal devotion and consecration of wealth to the Lord's work. With all her failings the life of the Church is powerful, her heart beats warmly for the Lord. Missionaries hazard their life as fearlessly as in Apostolic times. In high places and low, men, women, and children are doing deeds of charity for the Lord's sake, whose reward will be a glory as the brightness of the firmament. In what sense is the Church in a period of judgment? She is not suffering in prison, or chains, in the amphitheatre, or on the mountains. She has not yet reached the highest point in her march of victory over the nations. By and by she shall triumph, when the King shall come as the Bridegroom from heaven; then the sea, and earth, and hell shall give up their dead, and He shall bring His sons from far, and His daughters from the ends of the earth.

If this Great Pyramid be a revelation in any sense, it is a mutilated, unreliable one. If it contains truth it ought to have been preserved perfectly. There is uncertainty; there is difference in all its dimensions. Besides, it has been of no use for 4000 years to any living creature on earth, and it teaches nothing about the personality, the nature of God, or his purpose with us as sinners. It has nothing to say about the greatest problem of life—how can we be free from sin and guilt, and be righteous before God? It is near the end of time according to these writers, and its truth, such as it is, has been hidden till now and accepted only by a few; hitherto it has been, as it will be, a valueless revelation.

The most sound and sober view seems that the pyramids were intended for tombs.* This view is also supported by the derivation of pyramid, which I regard as the true one, namely, from the hieroglyphic per, signifying a house, and mut, death or dead. Hence the word pyramid denotes the house of the dead. Herodotus, speaking of Cheops, says: "A long period was consumed in excavating the eminence on which the pyramid stands, where he constructed a sepulchre for himself."† In Herodotus' time they were regarded as sepulchral monuments. They were built, doubtless, according to a definite plan, and intended to endure for remote generations under the clear sky and dry atmosphere of Egypt. Tier on tier was laid until the summit reached the sky at nearly 500 feet above the plain, and its massive blocks of granite, dragged probably by hand all the way from Syene, and its immense size impress every one with wonder and admiration at the skill and patience of those ancient workmen. But it was the work of blood, the labour was forced, and it was the work of many a broken heart and crushed life. If those triangular sides taught any truth, they ought to have taught the absolute equality of all men on the north, south, east and west. But the only true revelation has done that, the revelation of the Gospel of Christ, which had the Egyptians known, the Pyramids would never have been built. Those kings that assumed boastful titles shrank from no cruelty, and deserved well the hatred of succeeding generations. Rawlinson, quoting Birch, says: "The builders employed the measures known to them, but had no theories as to measure itself, and sloped their passages at such angles as were most convenient, without any thought of the part of the heavens whereto they would happen to point."

* Birch : Egypt from Ancient Times, p. 32, et seq. † Herod., book ii.

CHAPTER VII.

SCENES IN CAIRO, HELIOPOLIS, OLD CAIRO.

“Babylon, a strong fortress built by some Babylonians who had taken refuge there.”—*Strabo*, bk. xvii. c.i.



AMONG the most popular scenes in Cairo are the Bazaars, mere narrow lanes, unpaved, and extending in every direction without regard to order or convenience. The awnings are poles stretched across and covered with reeds to protect the merchants from heat. Turkish and Persian ware, are for sale here, and goods in brass, wood and stone, fish of the inland lakes, fruit, spices, and ornaments of gold and silver. In Cairo the goldsmiths' bazaar is wide enough to allow two persons to pass; the stock of goods is kept usually in small glass cases eighteen inches square. Many of the styles are copies of the ancient ones, as seen on the temples and tombs of the nobles or princes, and are wrought with exquisite taste and skill. From ancient times the Egyptians have been skilled workmen in gold as well as other metals, as may be seen by examining the necklaces and other ornaments of gold in the Boulak Museum. Modern jewellers in Cairo have no conscience in dealing with infidels, and I had therefore no faith in them. In order to guard against deception I brought a sovereign to the most noted workman and asked him to make a ring of it, after a particular pattern, and I proposed to see the process. My offer was declined, for there would be no

opportunity to plunder. The workmen, their benches, and their primitive tools are objects of interest. Some are usually plating brass ornaments for Fellahîn women with the thinnest covering of gold, others are mending broken earrings or nose jewels. Boys are employed at the quaint forges, the bellows of which consisted of a goat skin with a tube inserted into one end, and then forced into the forge. Placing one foot on the bellows, they pressed out the air and then lifted up the compressed sack by a string fastened to the skin at one end, while they held the other end in their hand. Thus alternately lifting with their hand and pressing with their foot, the fire was kept burning on the forge. The Mahommedan merchants have a superstition that the first transaction in the morning will rule the day, hence though never importunate to sell their goods, they will sacrifice them to any extent, almost, rather than allow the first customer to go without making a purchase. In Cairo and the Orient generally the merchant scans our clothes and general appearance; if his decision be favourable, he will treat us with profound deference, for fine clothing and ample funds are mighty divinities in Egypt as well as in Canada.

The carpet and silk bazaars are extremely interesting. In company with a friend an attack was made on a venerable-looking old man. His turban and gown indicated wealth and social distinction; his beard was longer than is usual, and white; there seemed a trace of kindness and benevolence in the old man's face. He was smoking a nargileh, and invited us to smoke another, but as we were unaccustomed to that kind of luxury we declined. He then provided us with coffee; the quantity was small, but black and as thick as molasses, without milk or sugar. Desirous of conforming to the custom of the land, each of us swallowed the dose, with an inward and unexpressed wish that he and it were in Damascus. We

began business, after the preliminary ceremony was ended, by asking for a Persian carpet. He spread out his stock on the mastaba on which we were sitting. Finally, one was selected, the price was asked, and we were staggered by the reply, "Mafeesh," nothing. I repeated the question, and he replied, "Take it, it is thine, thou art my friend, all I have is thine what is that to thee and me?" Immediately I felt I was in the unchanging East, in which its customs are as fixed as the hills. I thought of Abraham buying the field and the cave of Machpelah. When he asked the price, Ephron answered, "The field give I thee, and the cave that is therein."* Abraham knew it was only an Oriental figure of speech, and replied, "I will give thee money for the field." The owner then says, "My lord, the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver; what is that betwixt me and thee?" So when the Mahomedan ended his speech I said, "Come now, tell me how much will I pay thee?" He replied, "Ninety francs." There is no rule to guide in purchasing except this, which is almost universally true. Every seller is trying to cheat; and to obtain a reasonable price, divide what is asked by four. The Mahomedan looks with contempt on the European who pays what is asked; the Egyptian thinks he is weak-minded. Though he loses by the operation he respects the intelligence of the European who refuses to pay his extortionate demands.

In the cloth bazaar, Far-away Moses, whom Mark Twain has made famous, has his sign hung out. It is a curiosity, an innovation which must have given bitter pangs to the Mahomedan souls. He had done business in New York, and so imported this custom from Uncle Sam's land. He took pleasure in showing us his name and photograph in Mark's book, and, in order to have a claim on our custom, declared he

* Gen. xxiii. 11-15.

had seen us at Saratoga or Orchard Beach. It was vain to assert that neither of us had ever been at those places. Being a Jew, and fond of gain and gold, his aim was to induce us to purchase, and give him the pleasure of spoiling us of our goods.

In Cairo one sees the methods, not of the Egyptians only, but all Oriental races to some extent. In visiting the tin-smiths, carpenters, blacksmiths, the schools, and other places in the city, one is forcibly struck with the fact that their methods are the reverse of ours. Their language reads from right to left, and the substantive stands before the adjective which qualifies it; the people sleep, many of them, on the roof of the house, not inside of it. When a carpenter works at a lathe for turning wood, he sits, never stands, and holds the tool with the toes of one foot and with one hand, and when planing draws the plane towards him instead of pushing it from him. The night-watchmen place a large cage of wicker-work before the door of the shop which they are supposed to guard, lie down on it, huddle themselves like hedgehogs in their gowns, and go to sleep. I have seen the Moskee at night full of such cages and the watchmen asleep, never dreaming that robbers might enter the premises from the rear or the top; so they sleep at each shop door when watching their master's property. The native barbers shave the head instead of cutting the hair, and when finished, the barber holds up the small mirror before the shaved one saying, "May it be pleasing to thee?" and if it is satisfactory, he replies "May God make it good to thee." The Egyptians plead for bukshish that they may drink tobacco, not smoke it. The Fellahîn mothers carry their children naked across their shoulders, one little black leg hangs down the breast and the other down the back of his mother, and thus he makes a horse of his mother's shoulder. On one occasion I saw a mother with a child on each shoulder, one in her arm,

and carrying a bundle of wood in one hand, while her lazy lord marched in dignity behind without any burden. The blacksmith, instead of raising the anvil to the required height, digs a hole in which he stands, and is hampered in all his motions. When children are sent to school they commit the first chapter of the Koran to memory and then learn the last one in the book and come backwards, so that they have finished the book when they have learned the second chapter. Instead of the Fellahîn milking their goats in the field, they drive them into the house or at times up to the flat roofs and then milk them.

THE DERVISHES OF CAIRO.

Two classes of these fanatics are seen in Cairo, the dancing, and howling. From two p.m. to three p.m. every Friday, they give performances. The origin of these persons and their strange orgies is uncertain.* May they not be of Persian origin, and their superstition a remnant of that fire-worship so universal in the East, and through Syria and Palestine, where yet are to be seen on high mountains ruins of temples dedicated to Baal, as the sun-god of the Canaanite nations? On Carmel, in the time of Elijah, "the priests cried aloud and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets till the blood gushed out upon them."† The howling and whirling motion may be the modern form of those ancient, barbarous customs of their worship on the mountains. The mosque of the dancing dervishes is an octagonal building whose stone floor is covered with mats. The centre is occupied with the dervishes, a railing separating them from the Europeans who assemble to see them. From twenty to thirty usually perform. They wear grey felt caps, tapering towards the crown; their gowns are

* Vide Art. Baal., Smith's Dict. of Bible. † 1 Kings xviii. 28.

blue, or green, or brown. They squat on the floor, muttering the word "Allah," bowing themselves forward to the ground. All ages are represented, from a lad of twelve to old men of sixty years. On a gallery extending across one side sat two men and a few small children. The men began to intone parts of the Koran, to beat an old drum, and play a native flute. The music was of the most discordant kind, resembling that made by children on tinpans, or that made in remote, rural churches, where every person is a leader, and time and harmony are as varied as the taste and talent of each worshipper. The discord was intensified by the children, who occasionally jerked the flute from the player's mouth, whose composure, however, was unruffled by such trifles. Meanwhile, the men below were marching in order in a circle inside the railing, and, on coming to the spot occupied by the leader, the first man turned round, and facing the man who followed placed the toes of his right foot at right angles across his left foot and made a low salaam. Most of them were barefooted, some had stockings sadly out at the heels, and in need of darning by some motherly wife, whom, of course, they in their ignorance despise. Suddenly, they threw aside their gowns, and one by one marched into the centre of the area, extended his arms and began to whirl; soon they were all revolving, and their garments inflated like balloons. They were like huge living toad-stools revolving on two stalks; the faster the music, the faster their whirling became. Like the famous dance in the auld kirk of which Tam O'Shanter was witness,

"The piper loud and louder blew,
The dancers quick and quicker flew."

This is kept up until they are completely exhausted, or fall on the floor unconscious. A collection is taken up at the door, and, judging from the attendance, it must be at times large.

The chief exercise of the howlers consists in throwing their body backward and forward as far as possible with a violent jerk, and at the same instant uttering a sound compounded of a groan, a sigh and a grunt. Their exercises are injurious, from the violence of their action and length of time their body is subjected to such a strain. One goes away sad, at the thought of how low man can sink, when he can regard this as suitable service to God. This is but one phase of the heathen or world idea, that we must do something in the way of bodily suffering to make us acceptable to God. Is it not a confession of guilt, which seems inherent in human nature, and so becomes a witness of the truth of the Scriptures, that all have sinned? It is also a confession of our need of an atonement, which Christ has made for us with His own blood.

A RIDE TO HELIOPOLIS, THE ANCIENT ON.

A visit to this ancient seat of learning is one which every traveller should make. It was the Edinburgh or Cambridge of Egypt, when savage beasts roamed over the sites of the renowned cities of Europe. Passing to the end of the Moskee, near the hills, I drove in the direction of the tombs of the Khalifs, crumbling into ruins and infested by swarms of beggars ever on the alert to pounce on every one who has a hat on his head and infidel shoes on his feet. Near Matareeh were luxuriant fields of clover on the left, on the right were extensive orange gardens whose trees were laden with golden fruit, so that the branches required to be supported with props. In the garden near the site of ancient On, a water-wheel was driven by oxen, and the water was led in every direction in small channels. A wooden paling enclosed an immense sycamore tree laden with green fruit, the tradition regarding which is that Joseph and the Virgin found shelter under its branches

during the time of their sojourn in Egypt with the infant Jesus. Notwithstanding the impossibility of that tree having attained the age of nineteen centuries the trunk was literally covered with names of credulous persons cut into the bark. During the war of 1882, Arabi Pasha had the tree cut down to help in raising breastworks against the British, and among other evils has cut off the financial revenue of the Egyptian gardeners. The solitary obelisk stands close at hand, marking the site of the old city and the entrance to the Temple of the Sun. The Egyptian name of the city was "the dwelling of Ra"—the sun. The city seems to have stood on higher ground than the temple, and the mounds now occupied by a few miserable huts evidently point out the site of the city. It is called *Ann* on the inscriptions, *On* in the Bible. It was a city of priests, no fewer than 12,913 being connected with the temple service in the days of its splendour. Joseph married Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, a priest of On, and thus it is brought into connection with the early history of the Israelites in Egypt. The prophecy of Jeremiah in regard to it has been literally fulfilled: "He shall break also the images of Bethshemesh, that is in the land of Egypt." The place is now utterly desolate. When Alexandria became the seat of learning the sun of Heliopolis declined; in Strabo's time only a few persons remained in charge who showed among the objects of interest the house in which Plato lived. Now the elevated mounds are occupied by the poor huts of the *Fellahîn*. The city and temple have been swept away by the ravages of fire and foe. At the north-east of what seemed to have been the limits of the ancient city I found blocks of granite sphinxes and statues half buried in holes. A canal extends on one side from which the water was brought in smaller channels to irrigate the clover fields. The obelisk of rose coloured granite brought from Assuan is the solitary relic that remains of that

once famous shrine. It was erected by Usurtasen I., of the Twelfth dynasty, so that for thirty-seven centuries it has stood there with its slender apex pointing up to the blue sky. Kings and priests and philosophers have gazed on it and passed by it, into the temple; perhaps even the patriarch Jacob has seen it, and certainly Joseph the mighty Hebrew ruler. Probably there were two, one on each side of the entrance to the temple within, and it is more than probable that the Egyptian temples in some respects were models even for Solomon in the erection of the Temple to Jehovah. One cannot but notice at least the fact that Solomon set up pillars in the porch of the temple the name of the one on the right was Jachin, the name of the one on the left Boaz.* The obelisk is sixty-six feet above the level fields at its base; it is now nearly six feet below the surface to the foundation on which it stands, showing the height to which the land of the Delta has been raised in thirty-seven hundred years. The inscription on each of the four sides is the same, and intimates that Usurtasen, the son of the Sun-god (Ra), erected it. On two sides bees have built their combs in the deep hieroglyphs, so that they are entirely covered. Within the temple was kept the sacred bull Mnevis, the incarnation of Ra. In those days there was an element of spirituality in their worship, for it was only as a visible embodiment of Ra, that the bull was worshipped; but, instead of progressing in a spiritual system of belief, the Egyptians, with all their wisdom, sank into creature worship, and hence deified dogs, cats, wolves and crocodiles. At On, the phoenix, according to the fable, was consumed. It was of golden plumage about its neck, and its body of blue colour. At the close of five hundred years it came to the temple of the Sun and was burned on the altar. On the second day a worm arose out of

* Vide 1 Kings viii. 21.

the ashes, on the third it became a beautiful bird and flew away to return again to die after five hundred years had passed. Herodotus says "His wings are golden and red; in size and appearance he greatly resembles an eagle. He comes once in five hundred years, flying from Arabia to the temple of the Sun, bearing the body of his father, enclosed in myrrh, which he buries in that temple."* In this simple legend, as well as in a more definite way in later times, one can trace the belief of those early Egyptians without a revelation in the doctrine of a bodily resurrection, and thus could have taught Saducees and modern materialists a truth which they never knew. Thothmes III., of the Eighteenth dynasty, one of the most famous kings, whose great works in different parts of Egypt are yet objects of wonder and admiration, built a wall about the temple and placed some splendid obelisks before it, two of which called "Cleopatra's Needles," were brought by Augustus to Alexandria, and one of them now stands on the Thames embankment in London, and the other in New York. In Paris and Rome are obelisks that have been plundered from Heliopolis. Only its name remains, and its solitary granite obelisk; and a feeling of regret comes over one when, standing amid the desolation and ruins of Heliopolis, he learns the truth that cities like men shall perish.

OLD CAIRO.

The original name of this old quarter was Fostat. When the new city of Cairo was founded, Fostat was known as Musr-el-Ateekch, old Musr. A portion of the original site was enclosed by walls built of flat brick used by the Romans. This was an ancient Roman fortress, and two of the projecting towers or bastions are yet in good preservation. Passing

* Herod., bk. iii.

through a rickety wooden gate along with Dr. Watson, of Cairo, I entered the Coptic quarter; the streets were narrow and quite deserted, an open door here and there enabled me to see into the inner court of the houses, on the floor of which the men were resting in the heat of the day. An old man acted as guide to the Church of Abu Sergeh, the modern Coptic Church of St. Mary. The entrance-porch contains some tumble-down benches. In the floor of the first room of the church is a well for the baptism of members; beyond is the room for the women, and still farther is the part of the church for the men, separated from the former by a wooden screen, while another screen with fine carving in wood and ivory separates the altar from both. There are no benches, the worshippers having to stand. A few old pictures of scenes in the life of the Virgin hang on the walls. There is an entire want of reverence on the part of the Copts for holy things; at the altar during the communion one would fancy the worshippers were a crowd gathered at an auction and shouting out their bids to the auctioneer. The communion bread is in the form of a small round loaf, three inches in diameter and one inch thick, on the surface of which are the Coptic cross and small dots to signify the nail-prints in our Lord's body on the cross. Everywhere in Egypt the Coptic priests and people are punctilious enough as regards forms and creed, but they are too ignorant to know the spiritual truth that alone gives power to the ordinances. They adhere to the dogmas of their church with a tenacity inherited from the times of the Arian controversy about the nature of Christ, which so paralyzed the life of the Egyptian Church that she has not recovered to this day. In the crypt, whose floor was damp and ceiling mouldy, our credulous guide pointed out small recesses in the wall in which Joseph and Mary slept during their sojourn in Egypt. It must have been a healthier

spot then than now, otherwise they would never have lived to see Palestine again, and they must have been small of stature to have occupied such a space. The ancient name of the city that occupied part of the site of Old Cairo was Babylon, and many have supposed that from this city Peter wrote his first Epistle. At the close of the first Epistle are the words, "The church that is at Babylon saluteth you." There is no tradition that Peter was ever in Babylon, the famous Assyrian capital, while some have supposed Babylon to be a mystical name for Rome. In the Talmud Rome is figuratively designated Babylon, but the evidence of Scripture, though negative, is too clear for mere tradition or fanciful interpretation. He was in Jerusalem in 52 A.D. at the council mentioned in Acts xv. He could not have been in Rome in 58 A.D., or Paul would have sent salutations to him in the Epistle to the Church there, nor yet was he there during the time of Paul's imprisonment, otherwise he would have been included as the most prominent among those who would send their salutations in the Epistles written from Rome. Writers like Origen and Lactantius, who assert that Peter was in Rome during the close of his life, had no more evidence for their belief than we have. The tradition that speaks of his flight through Porta Capena is evidently the work of some one who wished him to have equal glory with the great Gentile apostle. The Lord carrying His cross met him outside the gate. He asked, "*Domine, quo vadis?*" ("*O Lord, whither goest thou?*") "I go to Rome," said Jesus, "to be crucified again for thee." Peter at once returned, was imprisoned in the Mamertine, and crucified on the Janiculum hill the same day Paul was beheaded at Tre Fontane.

This old quarter in Cairo was named Babylon, because, according to Diodorus, it was occupied by the descendants of the captives taken by Sesostris, and Strabo mentions the fact

that one of the Roman legions in Egypt was stationed at Babylon. In the salutation of Peter there is added, "and so doth Marcus, my son." Is this St. Mark? It is generally supposed to be so. Tradition declares that St. Mark preached in Alexandria, and his church was shown there for many centuries. The distance between Cairo and Alexandria is not great, and there would be frequent communication between these two leaders in the church. Peter was the apostle of the circumcision, and in the time of the Ptolemies there were many Jews in Alexandria and Egypt, for whose use the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek. Onias built a Jewish temple, in the nome of Heliopolis, at Bubastis, having received permission from Ptolemy and Cleopatra, and for centuries later, Jews were found in great numbers in Egypt. What, therefore, would be more natural than that after the death of Stephen and James, the brother of John, and also James, the leader of the Jewish Christian Church in Jerusalem, Peter should flee for safety to Egypt? It was near Palestine and there was frequent intercourse between the two countries, and Peter would be safe from the principal leaders of the Jews in Jerusalem. On the whole, therefore, evidence seems to preponderate in favour of old Cairo as the place from which he wrote his first epistle. A few minutes' ride on our donkey brought us to the Nile, where we embarked for the Isle of Rôda in a small boat, after much talk with the boatman as to the work he was to do and the pay he was to receive. The learned Dr. Watson mounted the back of the boatman and was carried out to the boat. I then followed in a similar fashion. The island contains a rickety palace, with wooden verandahs extending along one or two sides, the gardens containing orange trees, banana, lemon and palm trees, and the henna plant, with which the Egyptians colour their finger and toe nails. The Nilometer is here, which consists of a well sixteen feet in diameter, in the centre of

which is an octagonal pillar with Arabic measures inscribed on it. When the Nile rises sixteen cubits, or Egyptian ells, the land will produce good crops; when it is too high the seed is destroyed and the embankments are washed away, and when it is too low the land suffers from drought. The rise of the Nile is watched with the deepest interest by the Egyptians, for on it depends the coming harvest; and when it has reached a certain height, as indicated on the Nilometer, the river is let into the Khalig, or city canal, amid the most exciting festivities. A late tradition assigns the Island of Rôda as the scene of the finding of Moses in the ark of bulrushes. There is not even probability in its favour, for at the time of Moses the Egyptian Court was either at Memphis or at Zân, the site of the modern Tanis in the northern part of the Delta.



CHAPTER VIII.

MUMMY PITS, BENI-HASSAN, SIOOT.

“Bringer of food! Great Lord of provisions,
Creator of all good things!
He filleth the granaries; he enricheth the store-houses;
He careth for the estate of the poor.”

—*Hymn to the Nile. (Records of the Past, Vol. II.)*



SIOOT is the first town of importance south of Cairo, which may be reached by boat or rail. It is preferable to go by boat, as there are two places of interest to intelligent travellers—Memphis with its pyramids and serapeum, then further south are the famous tombs of Beni-Hassan. I rode along the edge of the desert from Ghizeh. On the right were the Libyan hills, along whose base the white sand was wreathed up like masses of driven snow in winter in Canada; Fellahin women were picking out by the roots dead shrubs for fuel. Crossing west at about six miles south of Ghizeh, I visited the ruinous pyramids of Abousir and Sakkara, the latter standing in the midst of Mummy Pits, extending for miles in the desert, in which probably the most of the common people of Egypt were buried prior to the eighteenth dynasty. Some of the pits have been opened, but the sand of the desert continually drifting in soon fills them again. The linen cloth in which the mummies were wrapped is as perfect as when folded round the dead more than thirty centuries ago.

About five miles from the river and in this immense graveyard of ancient dead, is the tomb of an Egyptian noble named Ti, probably erected in the time of the fifth dynasty, and therefore more than four thousand years ago, and is decorated with some of the finest painting in bas-relief found in Egypt. Ti rose from the ranks of the common people, married Nofer-hotep, a princess, and became one of the mightiest men in the country, "Chamberlain of the King" and President of the Royal Board of Works. He had estates in the north and south country, whose products are brought, as seen painted on his tomb, in boats and in baskets. The entrance is into a small court partly filled with sand; in this court are square pillars of limestone that once supported a roof. The walls of the interior corridor, chambers and large quadrangular court are covered with figures representing Ti, his wife and his servants. The hieroglyphs are finely cut, the colouring is fresh and the figures are well executed, for the artists had not been dominated by the canons of stiff conventionalism of later times. Ti is represented of greater size than any other person; his wife, who is termed the "beloved of her husband" and the "palm of amiability towards her husband," is represented as much smaller and apparently in the attitude of supplicating her husband. Men are seen ploughing with oxen yoked to a plough of the same kind as the Fellahîn use now. Rams are treading in the seed, men are beating them behind, while others in front hold food before them to encourage them to work. Thirty-six females, with baskets on their heads and presents in their hands, are represented coming from the villages of Ti in the north and south country. Officers, with their batons, are hauling unwilling criminals into the presence of the magistrate. Fishing, reaping, boat-building, are all represented. Ti is seen on a boat perhaps in an inland pond, like those of which the wealthy Romans were so fond. He is standing in the centre

of the boat, of commanding stature, his servants have speared a hippopotamus with a small crocodile in its mouth, and others have captured one by a hook fastened to cords, by which he is lifting it up. Job seems to have been familiar with the method of fishing and hunting as practised in Egypt, for he asks, "Canst thou draw out leviathan with a hook, or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down? Canst thou put a hook into his nose?"* The wealthy Ti had to give up his possessions and die like the common slaves that lie in nameless graves in that forsaken desert, and the scenes about his figure, and sacrifices offered to him when dead, tell forcibly the truth we often forget: death has passed upon all men. Unless some care is taken by the government, the torches of careless dragomen will soon obliterate with smoke this most exquisite work of ancient art.

To the south, a few minutes' walk over the soft, shifting sand, is the Serapeum, or the tomb of the Apis bull, worshipped at Memphis, the ancient capital. He was the incarnation of the god Phthah, and splendid accommodation was provided for him in a court of the temple surrounded by Osired pillars. On fixed days he was led through the streets of Memphis, and the citizens came out of their huts to salute him. He was tended by numerous priests and fed on dainty food, but if he did not die before twenty-five years of age, the priests drowned him, and his embalmed body was deposited with honours in the Serapeum. All Egypt then went in mourning until a new Apis was found by the priest and was led amid the rejoicings of the people to his abode in the temple.

Cambyzes having suffered a defeat in the south, came to Memphis, at the time of their rejoicings for their new god. He thought it was at his defeat, he, therefore, summoned the

* Job xli. 1, 2.

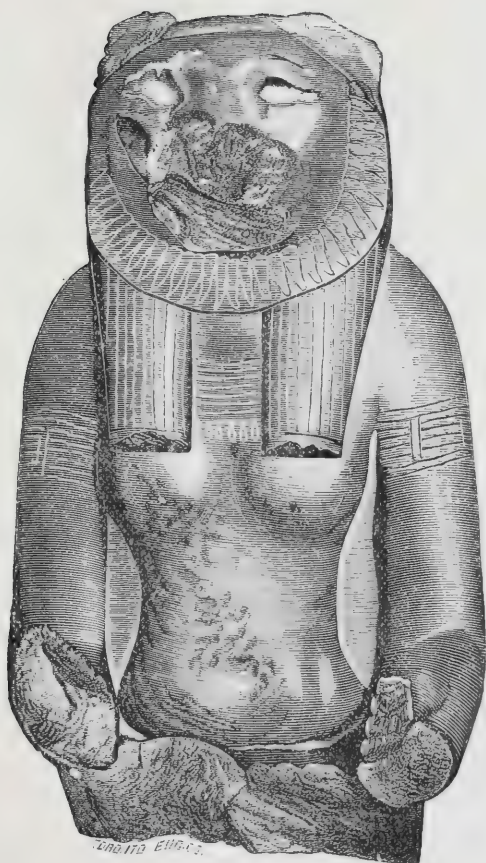
magistrates and asked the cause of their rejoicing; they replied their god had appeared to them, and they were wont to rejoice with feasting. The explanation does not seem, however, to have been satisfactory, for he called them liars and put them to death. Apis is known says Herodotus from the following signs, "it is black, has a square spot of white on the forehead, on the back the resemblance of an eagle, in the tail double hairs, and on the tongue a beetle."* When the priests introduced Apis, Cambyses drew his dagger intending to strike the belly of Apis, but instead struck the thigh, and then laughing said to the priests, "O you blockheads! do the gods become such, consisting of blood and flesh, and that they may feel iron? Yet such a god is worthy of the Egyptians!" The upshot of the difficulty was, the priests were scourged, the rejoicing Egyptians were put to death, and Apis died of his wounds, and was deposited in the Serapeum. The Serapeum is a long corridor extending east and west, with numerous vaults at right angles or nearly so to the main passage. Sixty four of these vaults have been discovered, and twenty-four of them contain each a monster sarcophagus, in which the Apis was laid. These Sarcophagi, are of dark blue or red granite, polished like glass, and are about thirteen feet long, seven feet broad, and eleven feet high. The lid consists of a single stone, and is removed from some of them. By means of a ladder I ascended one, and then descended in the same manner with a number of gentlemen; we found the tomb capacious enough for ten persons to stand in. In a side gallery a sarcophagus and lid are lying on the spot to which the workmen had brought it, when either the downfall of Memphis or the dethronement of Apis as the god of the city took place, and there it stands as it was left by the ancient workmen. The atmosphere is stifling, and is made

* Herod., bk. iii. 28.

worse by the candles and torches necessary to light up the recesses and subterranean tombs. The Serapeum was discovered in 1851 by M. Mariette, who says, although 3,700 years had elapsed since a vault of the reign of Rameses II. was closed, "the finger marks of the Egyptian who had inserted the last stone in the wall, built to conceal the doorway, were still recognisable on the lime. There were also the marks of naked feet imprinted on the sand which lay in one corner of the tomb chamber."

The modern village of Mitrahîneh, a collection of mud huts, occupies the site of ancient Memphis, the Egyptian name of which was Men-nofer, the good place. It was so named after Menes, its reputed founder. The low lands to the north and west of the modern village mark probably the site of the lakes constructed by Menes for the defence of the town. Phthah, from the Egyptian "Pet-h" (to open), was the chief deity of Memphis, and was worshipped as "the Lord of truth," "the Father of beginnings," and "the Creator of all that is in the world." His temple was the most magnificent in the country, and was surrounded by a wall. Within this area temples of other gods stood, and perhaps the limestone of which they were composed, or the walls, gave origin to the name of "the city of the white wall." Herodotus is lavish in his praises of this temple. Succeeding kings vied with each other in adorning it with statues or adding to the temple. Herodotus informs us "Sesostris, Rameses left monuments of himself in figures of stone, placed in front of the temple of Vulcan; two of them representing himself and his wife are thirty cubits high."* In the midst of palm groves, to the south of the modern village this figure of Rameses is yet seen. It is forty-two feet in length, composed of limestone, and is lying on its

* Herod., bk. i. 110.



Brought by the author from Memphis, ancient Noph.

face in a pool of water. On the head of the figure is the kingly pschent, or ancient crown, with the snake, the symbol of kingly wisdom. On the breast is a shield and a girdle about his middle, on which is the name of Rameses. Other statues are lying about, broken and defaced. South of Rameses, is another smaller hole in which there is lying a granite statue, probably of Rameses and his son, cut out of the same block. To the north-west are ruins of statues and bases for others. Cambyzes captured the city, slew ten thousand Egyptians, and from that time it continued to wane, and from the founding of Alexandria it sank into insignificance. The low country west from Mitrahineh to Sakkara was covered with heavy crops of clover, while large fields of tomatoes and melons and garlic extended north and south. Where mighty kings lived in splendour, and trampled on the liberty and life of millions of human beings; where famous temples stood adorned with splendid works of art, there are now fields of clover and forests of palms. The modern village is a wretched place, and so are the people, the men are lazy and poor, the women were working in the fields kneading manure with their bare arms into thin cakes for fuel. Stagnant pools and filth are at every door. How true is the word of Jehovah about great Memphis, "I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph;"* "The princes of Noph are deceived."† Every traveller who rides or walks over the site of fallen Memphis must say the word of the Lord is true. Rameses is debased; in a pool of filthy water lies the image of that king who boasted of his prowess and deeds of valour, and who set up his image to be worshipped as well as Ammon, or Horus. The idols are destroyed, they have no glory given them even by the degraded Fellahîn of Metrahineh, and the princes who

* Ezek. xxx. 13. † Isaiah xix. 13.

wished to perpetuate their glory in those monster statues have been deceived, their name is powerless, their works are in ruins, the palaces and temples of Memphis have perished.

One day's sail brought Beni-Hassan in view, on the east side of the Nile. In company with a few others I rode up to the tombs hewn in the rock, about two miles from the river. A short distance up a ravine at right angles with the shore line is the cave of Artemis. It is a temple built by Sethi, father of the great Rameses. The portico contained originally eight columns; only four remain. On the outer wall are hieroglyphic inscriptions, on the inner are frescoes of Pasht, the lion-headed goddess, receiving worship. Along the face of the limestone hill are two tiers of tombs, the upper tier is badly destroyed, along the lower one are some large tombs with frescoed scenes, representing wrestlers, hunters, and persons catching fish and birds. In the most northerly one is the procession of strange people, with pointed boots on their feet, with short beards and Asiatic colour and feature. These have been supposed to be Joseph's father and brothers coming into Egypt to settle in Goshen, and has been pointed to as a verification of Bible story. Scripture truth is never strengthened, but weakened, by bringing forward in its defence questionable evidence. The number, as any person may count, is thirty-seven, which does not agree with the number of Jacob's family given in Genesis. The great man to whom these people are bringing presents is the Egyptian owner of the tomb. He has two dogs at his feet, one behind and one before him. An Egyptian introduces to him the strangers, who bring as presents geese, the ibex, and the gazelle. Four men with bows and clubs are leading an ass, which is carrying two children placed in baskets, another ass follows laden with presents, and one man plays on the lyre. Their mode of travel is at variance with Genesis. "The sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their

wives, in the waggons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.”* There is no old man in the company such as we might expect to represent Jacob, nor are there the waggons with the wives and little ones. Besides why should this representation of their arrival have been in Central Egypt? Their coming would be better known in the north, and if it was of any importance to commemorate the event it would have been in the tombs and public buildings in the north country. Almost east of Beni-Hassan is Myos Hormos a port on the Red Sea, which from very early times Phœnician sailors navigated. There would naturally be at least a small colony of them at such ports; may the scene not represent them bringing presents to the great man who ruled this part of the country? The animals which they bring are such as would be found in desert regions over which they would come, while the other gifts would be such as they might have obtained from their seafaring countrymen and be valuable in the eyes of an inland Egyptian magnate. The modern Beni-Hassans occasionally abandon their miserable reed-and-mud hovels, and occupy the tombs in the mountains. Perhaps they have an eye for the beautiful in nature, as they can have an extensive view over the valley below, or perhaps they go there to meditate on the frailty of human life and the vanity of human greatness. They are the most villainous fellows between Cairo and Assouan. Their demands for bukshish were accompanied by fierce oaths. The younger lads wore a shirt which hung in rags round their loins, the hair of their head was cut close to the scalp, except a tuft on the crown, which was a nest for sand that flew in clouds across the plain. They were like demons, defiantly demanding money. Money which was thrown them from the boat frequently fell into the water; they

* Genesis xlv. 5.

plunged in after it and searched with hands and toes, and finally fished it out of the Nile mud and lodged it in their mouths like monkeys, and made grimaces for more.

Sioot was reached on Saturday, January 28th. Early in the morning I took a donkey and rode up to the American Mission House, and met the Rev. Mr. Griffin who kindly showed me over the mission schools and church. There are in attendance four hundred Egyptians at the Sabbath service, two hundred and eighty-four attend the day school, and nine young men are studying in the college. The students sleep on mats placed on raised platforms, which extend along the wall, a wooden box contains their bread, to which the Mission authorities add vegetables to make it palatable. New brick buildings were being erected that will give increased comfort and facility in carrying on the important work, in giving a European education and knowledge of the Gospel of Christ to the Copts and others in Egypt. From my observation of the work of the American Presbyterian Mission in Egypt, I do not regard it as too strong a statement to make, that it has done more for the moral and physical welfare of the people than all the rulers of Egypt. Passing through the city gate with Mr. Griffin, we entered a large open space shaded with immense acacia trees; scores of men were sitting against the wall, with papers in their hands, and discussing matters very excitedly. Here was the court of justice where the judges met daily under the shade of the trees, and the men were waiting to present their cases. This is one of the ancient customs of Oriental races. In the arrangements regarding the man-slayer, Joshua commanded, "when he shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, they shall take him into the city unto them."* Boaz purchased the land and took Ruth

* Joshua xx. 4.

to be his wife in the gate "and all the people that were in the gate and the elders said we are witnesses."* The Orientals were fond of gathering at the city gates to hear the news of the day, long before the modern newspaper gave every one the news of the world in his home. Thus the custom of administering justice there would soon arise, for at the gate ample evidence would be obtained to any decision, long before legal documents were of much service.

Passing through the camel market and the bazaars, our route lay along a raised embankment to retain the water of the Nile after the overflow of its banks. The Egyptians were repairing the road in the most primitive fashion. They carried earth in baskets on their heads and dumped them on the road. Time is of no value to the Egyptians, and as to wheelbarrows, and European inventions, they never take kindly to them. On the road up to the hill behind the city, pieces of mummied wolves were lying about, having been dug out of their pits by workmen in the quarries. The remains of the protecting deities of old Lycopolis were scattered like rubbish over the sand. The tombs rise in tiers above one another. The ceiling of the ancient tombs along the face of the hill is a blue ground, with golden stars on it. In some tombs, one room conducts to another, and in all of them is a pit with a gentle incline, twenty or thirty feet deep, into which the mummy was deposited. There is one excavation about forty feet square, with vaulted roof, supported by pillars whose bases still stand *in situ*, and the capitals are seen cut out of the roof, but the pillars themselves are gone. Around the upper edge of the wall runs a white scroll on black ground. On both sides of the door, within and without, is the figure of a priest of colossal dimensions, to indicate social position and authority. The door

* Ruth iv. 11.

of this chamber is very large ; inside, deep slots are cut into the sides and top. The door seems to have been of one piece, and placed into this cut groove from the inside. In the roof of the tomb is an opening, about the size of a human body, cut through the mountain. On its side are notches into which the feet might be placed when climbing in and out. This was evidently the mode of ingress and egress. The whole structure seems to be different from that of other tombs in Egypt. Is it a tomb? Below Sioot is another town, named Abouteg, a corruption of *αποθηκη*, storehouse. In the famine, when Joseph ruled the land, the grain was gathered into storehouses. One would naturally be built somewhere, in this rich valley, to store the products for the coming years of scarcity. Through the East, generally, caves were used for storing grain. In many villages of Palestine I saw the people lifting up the grain from these rocky caverns, some of which were lined with cement. May this not have been one of Joseph's storehouses, or of the priests, who would follow Joseph's example and store away what grew on their ground? If so, then it forms a link that joins us with Bible history and the famous son of Jacob. The top of the hill is covered with broken pottery, perhaps the remains of the vessels that contained offerings to the dead in the tombs below, or to the wolves, the gods of the ancient city. At the foot of the hill there is a modern graveyard, enclosed by a rude wall. It has become too small, and the skulls and hands of the dead were dug out of their graves, to make room for others, and were lying scattered about, mingled with pieces of mummied wolves. So, in Egypt every one has his day, and then must give place to another—in his grave as well as in his house. Eastern towns are splendid schools for cultivating patience. On my return to the Nile, in passing through a narrow street a halt had to be made. A camel was treading along in one direction, and a donkey laden with baskets was

facing him. Thick scantling occupied the middle of the narrow street. These three objects blocked the way. The Orientals have a routine programme for every event, which must be carried out to the letter. Shouting, in the deepest gutturals, began, and each man beat his animal, never attempting to remove the scantling, or guide the creatures. When tired they rested, and then repeated the shouting, freely interlarded with oaths at things in general. Then succeeded another period of silence, and finally the awkward camel backed into a hole in the wall of the street. The scene ended, to be repeated at some other place, and I moved on.

Denderah, the next place of note up the Nile, is situated inland from the Nile about two miles. Here Athor was worshipped, the hawk-headed goddess, whom the Greeks identified with Aphrodité, and the Romans with Venus. Among other titles she was named the "celestial mother" and "lady of the dance and mirth." The portico of the famous temple at Denderah is supported by twenty-four columns, covered with hieroglyphics; the capitals have each four faces of the sun, with four lotus flowers in bloom. The signs of the Zodiac are represented on the ceiling, and on the wall is the scene of a king, after his purification, presented to Athor, who confers on him the two crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt. Beyond the portico is a hall with six columns, and having three rooms on each side. Beyond this hall is another with two side-rooms and a staircase leading to the top of the temple, from which I was forced to beat a rapid and inglorious retreat by swarms of furious bees that have built their combs in the sacred abodes of the goddess. At the remotest part of the temple is an isolated room filled with darkness, in which the figure of the goddess was kept; around this chamber is a corridor and rooms opening into it from every side. Athor is seen in many chambers receiving offerings from kings. Isis also is seen

with the globe and the Uraeus serpent on her head. Hawks, owls, and serpents are frescoed on the walls everywhere. The Zodiac, which was removed from the ceiling by French antiquarians, was supposed to revolutionize all theories of chronology and overthrow the veracity of the Bible. Burckhardt even regarded it as some thousands of years older than Biblical chronology would allow; but when brought to Paris, Champollion read the names of Augustus, Tiberius, Nero, and Domitian on it, and thus the expectation of the Frenchmen perished, and the Bible yet stands as a rock to crush to powder the false theories of men. The goddess is represented standing on a crocodile, the symbol of evil. The people of Denderah were bitter enemies of the crocodile, while the people of Ombos, to the south, worshipped it. Perpetual enmity existed between Ombos and Denderah on the crocodile question; this is not wonderful, for more enlightened people have had bitter hostility over religious subjects of equal importance with the crocodile. On the exterior of the west end of the temple are the figures of Cleopatra and her son in bas-relief; her features are rather Ethiopian, and far from the ideal of beauty. To the west is the temple of Isis, where the cow is figured before which the Sepoys prostrated themselves when the Indian army was in Egypt. To the north is a small temple dedicated to the genius of evil, the Egyptian Typho. The whole temple, and perhaps the city, was enclosed by walls of sun-dried bricks, which now lie in ruins, mingled with pieces of ancient pottery. Though the temple is Ptolemaic, it stands on the site of an ancient one dedicated to Athor, for we find Pepi, one of the kings of the seventh dynasty, calling himself "the son of Athor, mistress of Denderah."* The sun-dried bricks of the ancient Egyptians and the thin, burnt bricks of the Romans

* Rawlinson's History of Ancient Egypt, Vol. II., p. 112.

are lying in ruined heaps over the site of the ancient city. The fields were green on the north and south, and for two miles towards the foot of the Libyan hills. The dom and graceful date-palm dotted the plain amidst fields of grain. Though inferior to the mighty works of the early Egyptian period, this temple of late Egyptian art stands an object of admiration to the skilful artist as well as to the ordinary traveller.



CHAPTER IX.

THEBES AND ITS SPLENDID MONUMENTS.

The Great Temple of Karnak is “the noblest effort of architectural magnificence ever produced by the hand of man.”—*Fergusson's History of Architecture.*



FIVE hundred miles south of the Mediterranean Sea, in a fertile plain extending for miles on both sides of the Nile, are the ruins of Thebes. The city occupied both sides of the river, and its temples and monuments are perhaps the grandest on earth for massiveness, as well as delicacy of workmanship. Its origin is obscure, but appears in the eleventh dynasty as the capital of the upper country, and from that time increased in wealth and power, until it reached its climax in the times of the famous Rameses, the Alexander of Egypt. The old name of the city was Apé, to which the feminine article was prefixed, forming Tapé, which the Greeks translated Thebai, the English form of which is Thebes. It was well situated, for the valley itself was fertile, and trade was opened with the countries on the Red Sea, Arabia, and even Persia, and perhaps India. Precious stones, gold, ebony, balsam, panthers and apes were transported to the Theban kings from the land of Punt and the countries beyond. Ancient Greek writers speak of its greatness and wealth. Homer calls it Thebes of the hundred gates, which does not seem to have referred to the gates of the city wall, for no

traces of a wall have ever been discovered. Diodorus suggested that the gates were the Propylæa, or entrances to the temples. The Egyptian temples, as they now exist, are composed of numerous large buildings united to each other, which were the work of successive kings, and around the shrine of the deity are scores of rooms for the priests and others belonging to the temple, so that, in addition to the Propylæa that lead from one grand hall to another, one is astonished at the multitude of entrances to smaller rooms on every side. It is, however, quite possible Homer refers to the city gates, though no trace of a wall remains, for thirty centuries have obliterated the houses of the people, which would be made of the same sun-dried bricks as the wall. Where even are the palaces of the kings and the houses of the nobles? They also have all entirely perished. The first object one sees on the east side of the river on approaching Thebes is the grand pylon, standing before the temple of Karnak, one hundred and forty feet in height, and fifty feet in thickness. On the west are the limestone hills, far beyond the plain, in the deep recesses of which the famous kings and queens are buried. The plain is covered with magnificent temples; and in the distance is seen the two Colossi of Amenophis III. These remains of bygone times tell of past famous eras, when mighty kings enslaved the living to build temples to their gods, and fame for themselves. Thebes has perished; only a few grand structures exist to tell us what she once was, and the wretched villages of Luxor and Karnak, the abodes of grinding poverty, on the very site of the mighty capital, verify the truth: the things that are seen are temporal. On landing at Luxor, a native Nile boat lay moored to the stone foundations of an old Roman pier. Two Mahommedans and a boy were eating their evening meal. I watched them with interest. They were squatted on deck, at the stern of the boat, with a dish

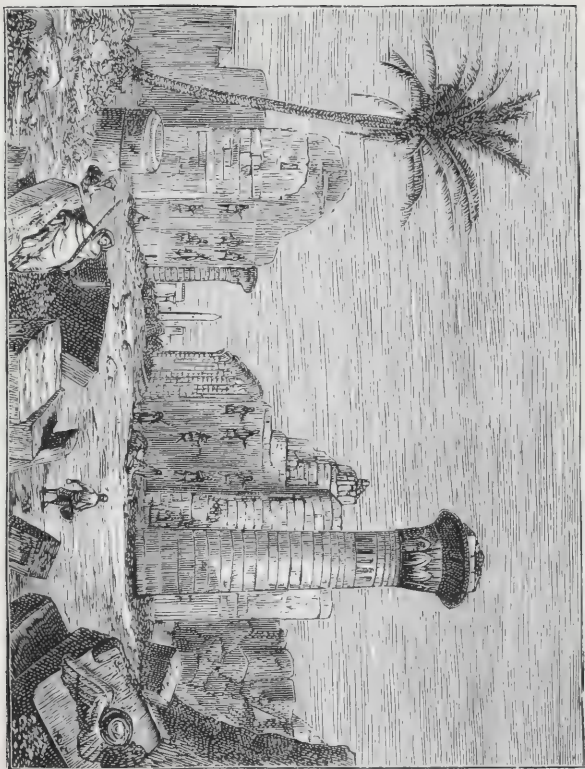
before them, out of which they all ate in common with their fingers. It seemed a race for life, each one bolting a handful of the soft food as fast as possible. At Luxor, as well as in Canada, the best man wins, or ought to win. The one with a spotless turban was the owner of immense hands and a mouth of no mean magnitude. He won the race, which was different from the contests of rowers on the rivers in Canada in this respect, that there were none to applaud the winner; the only joyous one was himself.

Luxor contains three or four hundred inhabitants and three or four consuls, the most famous of whom is Mustapha Aga, an ignorant and vain old Egyptian, who represents the Union Jack in that out-of-the-way place. His residence is fronted by a colonnade of immense pillars belonging to one of the ancient temples. He was arrayed in a flowing gown, on his head a spotless turban, and his feet encased in yellow slippers; his fingers were literally covered with gold rings, one of which he prized highly as the gift of the Prince of Wales. My visit to him was ended by a gift of a clay idol made in England, but which, with oriental solemnity, he wished to impose on me as a genuine relic, and for this he expected a handsome bukshish, but was disappointed.

THE TEMPLE OF KARNAK.

This temple stands one and a-half miles north of Luxor, and was approached by an avenue of sphinxes with rams' heads. The sphinxes faced each other, were about twelve feet long, many of them are destroyed, and those that remain are in ruins. Up this avenue went the famous warrior kings of the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties, when returning with their captives and spoils of war to offer to Amon Ra, the tutelary god of Thebes, and called the king of the gods, and

identified by Herodotus with Zeus. Amon is from the hieroglyph root amn, to hide. Originally, therefore, he was worshipped as the god who was concealed from human sight. The chief idea in the early Egyptian mind was the spiritual, and therefore impenetrable, nature of Amon. In the eighteenth dynasty Ra was united to Amon; hence he was worshipped as the sun-god, who is addressed in one of the ancient hymns as the "Lord of the gods, the maker of men, that givest them life, that listenest to the poor in distress. Thou deliverest the fearful man from the violent; who judgest the poor and the oppressed." The same thought is expressed by Job regarding Jehovah, "Canst thou by searching find out God; canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" And later writers speak of Jehovah's greatness as unsearchable. It is true that all civilized nations can place in their creed the fact that God is unsearchable, for His works are full of infinite wisdom, and are unsearchable, how much more so, God himself. But the sacred writers have employed, in truth, the same terms to Jehovah, that the Egyptians did to their false gods. In this however, there would be nothing inconsistent with inspiration. The entrance to the temple was on the side facing the river, to which an avenue of sphinxes also led from the Nile and was continued on the western side of the river. On the front of the pylon is seen the orb of the sun, with wings, and the serpent, the visible symbol of the great god of the Thebans. This symbol seems to contain at least these ideas, that Ra is the creator of life, and the serpent is the symbol of his wisdom and royalty, while the wings denote his protection to his people. Every Egyptian worshipper who entered into the temple passed under that mysterious symbol. Ashur, the god of Assyria, was symbolized by the figure of a man with wings, rising out of a wheel. Is this symbol a common heritage of the ancient races by which they attempted to give material existence to the



TEMPLE OF KARNAK.

unsearchable God ? Or is it not rather the faint outline of the statement in Genesis regarding the presence of Jehovah and the cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and which had been preserved in the consciousness and life of the race after the lapse of centuries and amid great national changes and extensive migrations. The cherubim over the mercy seat in the holy of holies were connected with the Shekinah, the presence of Jehovah. "The cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, and there I will meet with thee."* The cherubim of Ezekiel were connected with wheels, and each cherub had four faces, that of a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle. And in Egypt the sphinxes that formed the avenues to the temples or that stood near them, had wings, and a human face with the body of a lion. Are these heathen efforts to give form to the Scriptural cherubim ? It is interesting to find that the sacred writers employ the same symbols, in reference to Jehovah, which are sculptured on the pylons of ancient Egyptian temples. "The Lord God is a sun and a shield."† "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust."‡ Inside the portal we reach a large court, whose area is 100,000 square feet. On the right is a row of nine columns, on the left eighteen. Opposite the entrance is a passage between the ruins of lofty pylons into the pillared hall, unequalled in the world for the size of its columns, the richness of its design, ornamentation of capitals and ceiling. The roof is supported by one hundred and sixty-four columns, twelve of which, six on each side, form a central avenue ; they are sixty-six feet high and thirty-three feet in circumference. This Hall of Seti I., the father of the great Ramesses II., is three hundred and thirty feet long by one hundred and seventy feet broad, and dates back to the fifteenth century,

* Exod xxv. 19.

† Ps. lxxxiv. 2.

‡ Ps. xci. 4.

B.C. The columns are round and literally covered with figures of kings, gods and goddesses, and royal cartouches. The lotus and palm-capitals are executed with fine taste and exquisite skill, the workmanship is delicate, and compares favourably with the finest in Greece, while the grandeur of the columns and temple excels every other temple on earth. Passing through other pylons, the traveller enters a narrow hall open to the sky. Beyond this two obelisks stood, of beautiful granite, one of which is lying in ruins, and the other, which is standing, is over ninety feet high, and eight feet square at the base. It stands in a hall, the roof of which was supported by thirty-six square pillars with colossal figures of Osiris. This obelisk was brought from Assouan, and erected in seven months by Queen Hatasou. The hieroglyphs come down only part of the way from the top, on one or two sides. Perhaps Thothmes was taking the government into his own hands, and his sister, in haste, erected it to perpetuate her fame. The purpose of the obelisks is uncertain. They are found now only at temples dedicated to the sun, and may have been an offering to the sun god. In addition, they have the effect of relieving the heavy monotony of the ancient style of temple architecture. Besides those cunning old kings may have had a supreme desire to perpetuate their deeds of valour in this way, and have the credit also of making offerings to the deity, and thus a double purpose would be accomplished. The top of Hatasu's obelisk was covered, but for what purpose is uncertain. One can only stand and admire the skill of those ancient stone-cutters, and the mechanical ingenuity by which such blocks were not only brought so far, but erected on their base, which would be an engineering feat of no mean order now, with all modern appliances.

Going through another entrance, we stand in the sanctuary itself, a hall one hundred and twenty feet square. In the

centre of this area is a granite chamber fifty-two feet long and fourteen broad. This is divided into the porch, before which stood two stelæ; then the holy place, and finally the holy of holies. On two sides of the sanctuary were rows of small rooms for the priests. Here everything is plain and primitive; no colossi, no obelisks, no great pillars. The inmost shrine is a room without openings to admit light; and here the image of the god was kept. This is the form in the old temples of Egypt, and one is at once struck with the resemblance in general structure to the temple of Jehovah on Moriah. In both, were pillars before the porch, then the holy place, and behind all the holy of holies. During the four hundred and eighty years that elapsed from the exodus to the building of the temple, there was intercourse between Palestine and Egypt. Solomon had commercial dealings with the Egyptians, and even married a princess of Egypt. Among the builders of the temple in Jerusalem were the servants of Hiram, king of Tyre; and is it not probable that they, as well as the Jewish workmen, were acquainted with the Egyptian temples? And as they were the grandest on earth, they would naturally copy them in their general outline. One is forcibly struck with the resemblance, in many particulars, between the temple built to Jehovah by Solomon, and the temples at Karnak, Denderah and Philæ. The holy of holies is a chamber without windows, in the Egyptian temples; it was the same in the temple of Jehovah, as is implied in 1 Kings viii. 12. The Lord said "He would dwell in the thick darkness." Over so many centuries did the wave of Egyptian influence make its power felt in Palestine. The external walls of the Temple of Karnak are covered with battle scenes. On the north side of the main building is represented a battle with an Asiatic people. Seti I. is driving his chariot furiously over these people, who have long beards and whose colour and features show they are

foreigners. They are called Rotnno, and are from Lemanon, which may easily be the hieroglyph for Lebanon. Some are dead under his feet, others are fleeing, pierced with arrows in their backs. The king is leading some by a rope, and on his return offers his captives and his vases of gold and silver to Amon Ra. On the south-west of the main hall are represented the exploits of Rameses II., and also Shishak of the twenty-second dynasty. At the invitation of Jeroboam, king of Israel, he invaded Judea. In vain Rehoboam fortified his cities on the side of Judea nearest Egypt; city after city opened its gates. He entered Jerusalem, and carried away the treasures of the temple, and plundered the palace of the king. On the south wall Shishak is represented of great stature, and the Jews are led by ropes, with their arms tied behind their backs. The hair of the head of thirty-eight of these captives is twisted into one cord, which the king holds in his left hand, and with the right swings a massive battle-axe to sever their heads from their bodies. On the wall here is the figure of a royal captive, beneath which is written in hieroglyphs the words "Yuteh-Malk" (King of Judah, or, King of the Jews). On this heathen temple we have an independent and important witness to the truth of Scripture. "In the fifth year of king Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, with twelve hundred chariots and three-score thousand horsemen. So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house."* Thus, from a heathen temple in a foreign land, far from Judea, and by the voice of a strange language, deciphered only during this century, God is bringing to light evidence to verify the Bible, and to silence the scepticism of this age, and prove that the word of the Lord endureth forever.

* 2 Chron. xii. 2, 3, 9.

This magnificent temple, which was twelve hundred feet long and three hundred and forty broad, was enclosed by walls which have perished. Its halls are at different elevations, and the base of the rows of columns is gradually elevated, thus increasing the apparent dimensions of the temple; and as one looks along the vast avenues of columns they seem interminable. The columns have different capitals. Some halls are covered, others open to the sky, some are in line with the axis of the main hall, others at right angles. This all arises from the strong dislike of the ancient Egyptians to perfect symmetry. To the north and east were other temples, whose grand ruins are yet to be seen. The poor village of Luxor, to the south, occupies the sites of famous temples and palaces, where yet obelisks, granite statues and colossal columns are standing to attest the ancient grandeur of the city of Thebes. These were all connected with avenues of sphinxes and monster pylons that stood at the entrance to these temples. After repeated visits, the impression this colossal temple and the ruins that cover the plains made on my mind was, that in the times of its glory it must have been, in magnitude, in wealth and artistic beauty superior to every temple on earth, in ancient and modern times. For over seven hundred years king after king vied with each other in adding to this grand temple an offering to his god, and also giving an enduring evidence to his own fame and power. "The hall of columns at Karnak is the most sublime and beautiful of all the edifices;"* and the whole temple "is the highest effort of Egyptian architectural genius."

On the west side of the Nile is a rich plain extending for miles from the river to the hills. This was once covered with magnificent temples and colossi that once belonged to Thebes. I crossed from Luxor in a boat to an island, formerly occupied,

* Rawlinson Hist. of Anc. Egypt, Vol. II., p. 304.

now desolate ; beyond is an arm of the Nile, or an ancient canal, that may have watered the plain. The heat was oppressive and the fine dust almost blinded and suffocated me. Riding north for some distance I reached the temple of Medinet-Abou and then Deir-el-Bahiri and Deir-el-Medinet close to the Libyan hills. On Deir-Bahiri is represented, in perfect preservation, the expedition sent by Queen Hatasu to the land of Punt on the Red Sea. Five ships are sent, each manned by thirty rowers and ten of a crew. On their return from this Holy Land they bring incense-trees, gold, silver, dogs, leopard skins, and slaves. Deir el-Medinet contains on its interior walls, on the south side, a judgment scene. Osiris is waiting on his throne the coming of the souls into Ameuti. A balance stands before him in one scale of which Horus places an ostrich-feather, the symbol of justice, and in the other a human heart. Thoth, the dog-headed god, sits on the top of the scales to see justice done to the person who is tried. On the wall above are forty-two assistants in two rows who help Osiris in the administration of justice to the dead. The theology of the early Egyptians here expressed is worthy of notice, and its agreement with some of the leading dogmas of the Christian Revelation. It contains these facts, that man is responsible to the Almighty Judge, and justice will be administered. There is a future life and a future judge. The heart is employed to denote the seat of our moral nature. These are in harmony with the teaching of Scripture, for God shall render to every man according to his deeds. "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."* "With righteousness shall He judge the world."† "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."[‡] Whence did the Egyptians receive those truths ? Were they a divine revela-

* 1 Romans xiv. 10.

† Psalms xcvi. 9.

‡ Proverbs iv. 23.

tion to them in any sense? Or are they evidence that God has given to all nations a knowledge of moral truth sufficient to make them righteous and also responsible? The Septuagint was translated into Greek probably half a century prior to the origin of this judgment scene. May not the knowledge of the Scriptures have been carried in that interval to southern Egypt? Thus the main truths of Revelation were making their influence felt in those early days in the faith and life of the Egyptians.

At the base of the hills and near Deir el-Medinet is a shaft cut far down into the mountain. Here the discovery of the thirty-six royal mummies, now in the Boulak Museum, was made by Mr. Brooks. They are perfectly preserved. Each body is wrapped in innumerable folds of fine linen; he is laid then in a thin wooden case, which was placed in another casket about one and a-half inches thick. The outer surface of the coffin is beautifully painted. Osiris is represented with the ankh, the symbol of life, and the sceptre in his hand. The sun with wings and the serpent also are all on the coffins. The poor Egyptian who discovered these had opened the cases and plundered the mummies of their royal ornaments of gold; but, finding it impossible to get the bodies out of the country for sale, he gave information to the authorities. The discovery may prove of historical value if the mummy of Menephthah, the king at the date of the exodus, be among them; for it will settle the long-disputed question whether the king perished with his soldiers in the sea. It is possible the king may have been drowned in the sea and his body recovered and embalmed, for on the following morning the bodies of the Egyptians were driven by the waves on shore, and nothing would be so abhorrent to the Egyptians as to leave the dead unembalmed and unburied. The absence of his name in Exodus as among the drowned proves nothing, for the Israelites had no knowledge

one way or the other. The kings were leaders of the army, and this Pharaoh was so determined to bring back the Hebrews that he would risk his life to gratify his anger. It is doubtful however if he would imperil his life in the sea even to conquer the Hebrews, and for these reasons it is probable enough he may be among the royal dead now lying in their coffins in Boulak. How strange to look on that black face of the king of thirty-five centuries ago, who crushed the Hebrews until their cry for help reached to heaven, and who learned finally that Jehovah is omnipotent, and the kings of the earth must obey Him.

The kings had their tombs hewn out of the Libyan hills and concealed from human gaze. The age of pyramid building had passed and the warrior kings of Thebes contented themselves with inferior tombs. Their entrance was hid with the utmost care, but they have been opened, some of them long ago, and plundered. The tomb of Seti is three hundred and twenty feet long, and descends gradually into the heart of the mountain. The alabaster sarcophagus found in the remotest chamber is now in London. The tomb is entered by a number of steps, then a gentle incline leads to the end of the tomb. It seems not to have been finished, the draughtsman has drawn some figures in red ochre, and they have been corrected by another person who used black material, and thus they are yet seen, as they were left ready for the sculptor. Perhaps the death of the king caused the work suddenly to cease. This and other royal tombs consist really of a number of chambers, in some cases with small side rooms for members of the royal house. Seti is represented making offerings to the gods, and is finally introduced by Horus to Osiris. Even in death the kings were superior to common people, for Osiris was supposed to be honoured by the introduction. On other tombs all kinds of trades are represented. Among other strange objects

painted on the walls of the tomb of Rameses is a serpent with three heads, wings, and human feet. The triple head may denote the perfect wisdom of the king, and the wings his speed to make his wisdom known, or to conquer his enemies. The valleys are perforated by these royal houses of the dead. While they fought to subdue foreign nations, they carefully prepared these costly tombs for their bodies, and each one slept in his own house.

The Rameseum formerly called the Memnonium, built by Rameses II., is only inferior to the temple of Karnak. The entrance pylons are massive, beyond which are three immense pillared halls, succeeded by six small chambers in one of which was the abode of the god. In the second hall were eight square piers, thirty feet high, with colossal figures of Osiris. In the first hall is a colossal statue of Rameses of dark bluish granite, the arms and legs of which are mutilated and the head is broken by the Fellahin. The original height was fifty-four feet, and its estimated weight nine hundred tons. It is the largest of the great statues in Egypt, and excites the admiration of all travellers as an evidence of the skill of the sculptors and the ability to move such a mass of stone from Syene, over three thousand years ago.

To the south of the Ramsium are the noted colossi of Amenophis III. They are figures of the king, and were originally cut out of one block of sandstone, and nearly seventy feet high. They are in a sitting posture with the hands resting on the knees. The statues of his wife and son are on each side but reach only to his knees. He is represented as in a state of rest after his wars with the Ethiopians. It is probable they stood in front of a temple, and through an avenue of colossal figures the worshippers went to the house of their god. The northerly one is said to have uttered musical sounds at sunrise. The fact is not denied, but modern writers differ as to the

cause. Some regard it as having been produced by the sun's rays on the stone, or by a change of temperature. But a boy concealed now in the hollow of the statue and striking it with a piece of iron will cause it to give forth such a sound, and if the king wished special glory to his statue, or the priests to the temple in the rear, they could easily have carried out such a device. The sculptor, boasting of these colossi, says: "I immortalized the name of the king. I executed two portrait statues of the king, astonishing for their breadth and height. I caused to be built eight ships, whereon the statues were carried up the river; they will last as long as heaven."* His prediction will not be fulfilled; they have been shaken by earthquakes, and are repaired, but are again falling into decay. Facing Luxor and Karnak, they have watched the decline of the glory of Thebes and Egypt. They have beheld her splendour and now her poverty. Like solitary dead pines in a Canadian field stretching out their withered branches, they tell even in their decay, of the mighty trees that have been hewn down. So these colossal figures, rising up in solemn and solitary majesty in the midst of green fields show the havoc which time and human arms have done, and tell of the mighty glory of ancient Thebes.

In Ezekiel God warned Thebes of her doom: "I will execute judgments in No." "I will cut off the multitude of No." "No shall be rent asunder."† And Nahum, pointing out to Nineveh the fate of mighty Thebes, asks: "Art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it?"‡ These words are fulfilled to the letter, the inhabitants are poor, they make a wretched living by robbing the graves of their dead and selling the heads and hands and feet of mummies. The temples are per-

* Brugsch Hist. of Egypt, Vol. I., p. 425. † Ezekiel xxx. 14, 15, 16. ‡ Nahum iii. 8.

ishing, for the Nile will soon destroy their foundations ; the poor and the maimed of Luxor make their abode in some of those kingly halls. The bats flit about in scores, and wild beasts rendezvous in the famous Hall of Columns. That grand temple which was built for eternity is silently going to ruin even in the dry atmosphere of Egypt. Nò is populous no longer, her multitudes sleep in their mummied shrouds along the great plain towards the base of the everlasting hills, and the living are only a few hundred, so poor that he who is owner of a donkey is envied as a wealthy aristocrat, who ought to be plundered. Thebes has fallen, and so shall every nation perish that knows not God.

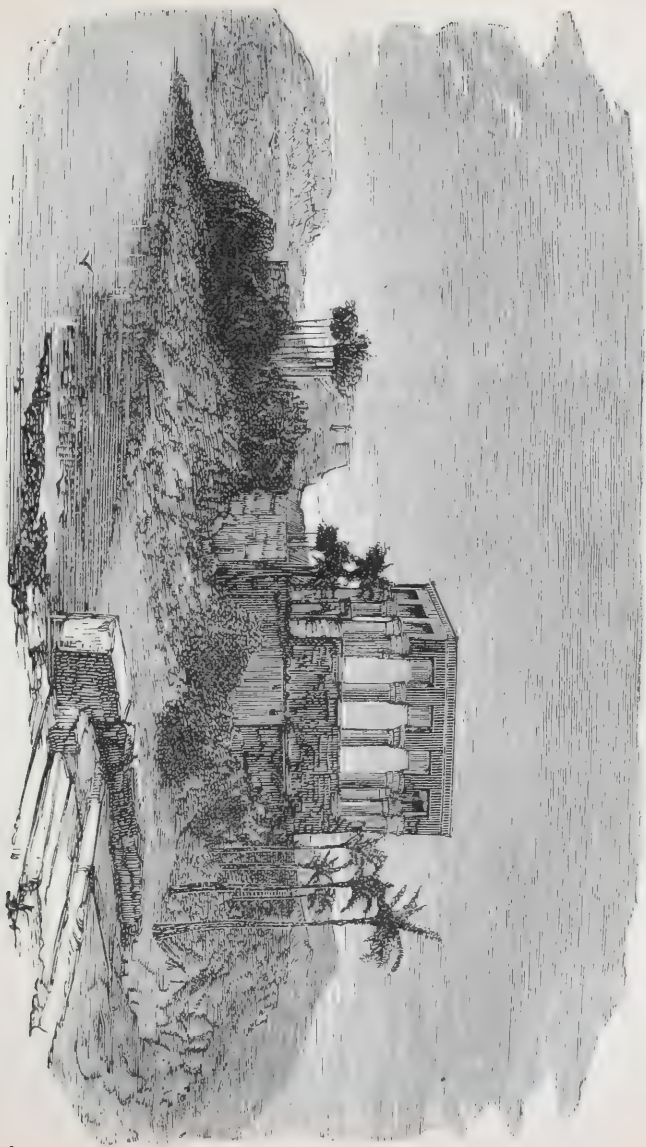
From Thebes to Assouan the Nile valley contracts, and at places only a very narrow strip of soil is sown with beans and doora. This is probably the *olyra* or *zea* of Herodotus. He says, in his day "The Egyptians prepare their meal from *olyra*, and they knead dough with their feet while they work clay with their hands."* This is the custom to this day ; I saw in many of the villages in Upper Egypt, the women working clay and manure together with their hands in the fields, and the dough for bread with their feet. South of Thebes the banks of the river are higher than in the north, and as rain seldom falls, the water has to be lifted from the Nile to irrigate the land. This is done by means of the *shadoof*, a pole with a weight at one end and a bucket at the other, suspended across two upright poles. When the banks are high three *shadoofs* are employed, the lower one is worked by two men who stand in the Nile, and the water is poured into a hollow cavity a third of the way up the bank, then another *shadoof* and two men raise it higher ; and, finally, the third one with two men raise it to the surface and pour it into a narrow channel which con-

* Herod., bk. ii. s. 36.

ducts it through the fields. The fields are divided into patches of about eight feet square with a small bank of earth raised around them; the Fellahîn break this bank with their feet and the water rushes in, and when it has sufficient the opening is closed and the water let into another square. The fields of southern Egypt have the appearance of immense checker boards, each square being green, with a brown band about it. Occasionally a water-wheel is seen driven by two oxen, a rope passes over a rudely constructed pulley, a number of pottery vessels is fastened to the rope which are filled in succession in the Nile, and then empty themselves in a trough from which the water passes through a channel into the field. The writer of Ecclesiastes seems to refer to this primitive mode of irrigation when he compares human life to the wheel, for when the "wheel is broken at the cistern," "then shall the dust return to the earth as it was."* The Fellahîn became blacker the further south one went. Their features were those of the Egyptian Fellahîn, with the dark skin of the race south of Assouan. Their condition was most wretched, many of them, with a bundle of grass or a mass of ragged cloth round their loins, toiled from sunrise until sunset raising the water from the river. Their clay huts are the abodes of utter desolation. A pottery vessel for water, a quilt rolled up in one corner, and a grass mat on the floor were the only furniture in many of them. Those who hire out their labour, with all their industry can only purchase doora, a little oil and a few dates; the haggard faces of the men and their families prove the terrible pangs of hunger they suffer. But nothing can help them except an invasion of the country by modern machinery for tilling the soil and watering it, and a righteous government over the people.

* Eccles. xii. 6, 7.

The igneous rocks in the bed of the Nile and on the left shore tell that Assouan is near, the ancient southern boundary of Egypt. On the right, limestone hills tower up, with deep chasms in them filled with sand, the fine grains of which sparkled in the bright sunlight. On rounding a sharp bend of the Nile the city came in view, with its minarets and palm trees. Egyptians, Turks, and Nubians thronged the shore. Some were naked, and others might as well have been so, for their small covering was almost worse than none. Some were basking in the sand, or sailing in the Nile boats, others were assailing us with that terrible word "bukshish," even before we set foot on shore. The donkeys here are very poor, like their owners, their ribs and bones striving to reach daylight through their skin. On one of these poor fellows, glorying in such high-sounding names as Bismarck, Prince of Wales, Telegraph, which ought to have been Hard Back or Slow Coach, I started for Philæ and the cataracts. For five or six miles the route extended over a barren waste, and then between granite hills. Masses of granite rock were piled up in the most fantastic shapes. Imagination could fashion them into great fortresses or black giant guards watching over Nubia, the Nile, and the desert from the dawn of creation. Hieroglyphics, royal cartouches, and Greek inscriptions abound everywhere. From the mainland I crossed in a small boat, manned by two Egyptians and a Nubian, to the sacred island of Philæ. The Egyptian name signified the place of the frontier, and was the southern boundary of Egypt; the Greeks seem to have translated the Egyptian Pilak into *φίλαι*, the beautiful. The scenery is fine, the small islands near Philæ that have been connected with the religion of the ancient Egyptians, the rocky shores, the surging cataracts, the comparative purity of the Nile water, and in the distance, palm trees casting a friendly shade over the small and poor villages,



PHILÆ, ON THE NILE.

form a scene on which the traveller loves to gaze, and one not found elsewhere in Egypt. The temple of Philæ is modern, belonging to the age of the Ptolemies. The trinity of Philæ was Isis, Osiris, and Horus. The island is interesting, for it was sacred from the times of the great kings of the eighteenth dynasty. On landing, I ascended among trees, that line the shore by a narrow pathway, then over mounds of broken pottery and marble columns, and the foundations of houses. None were allowed to visit this sacred island except the priests, who were always anxious to keep their mysteries from the eyes of the people. This is seen from the number of dungeon-rooms, without windows or the faintest ray of light; and an island would suit well for the purpose of isolating the priests from the people, and that isolation would increase the awe of the people in regard to the place, and the gods and the priesthood. So holy was Osiris, and so terrible, that the people were afraid to utter his name. Birds, it was believed, would not fly over the island, nor would fish swim near it. It was the last stronghold of Egyptian idolatry, and retained its hold on the people until 453 A.D. Now, however, its shores are trodden by plundering and begging Egyptians and Nubians. The propylon of the temple stands out as an object of grandeur, and the colonnade is very fine, some of the columns of which have been left unfinished. The figures on the pylon, and the delicate blue on the ceiling of the corridor are quite fresh. Inside the pylon is a large area, within which stands a temple on the left, on whose walls is a copy of the Rosetta stone; the Greek translation, however, is wanting, which would either indicate that it was older than the Rosetta stone, or that the builder was unable or unwilling to translate the hieroglyphic into Greek. Beyond a second pylon is a hall with columns, whose capitals are exquisitely carved with the lotus and palm leaves. Further in the interior is the sanctuary and dark rooms connected with the mysteries of the

worship of the gods. How different those dark rooms of the heathen temple from the churches in which Christ is worshipped. Heathenism was a system that loved darkness. But Christianity rejoices in light; it is a system of light; it is the truth of Him who says, "I am the light." It has nothing to fear from light, for the more investigation discovers of the ways and works of God, the mightier will Christianity become as the power of God, for the discovery of all truth can only be a defence of revelation, and not its destruction. The legends represented on the walls of this temple are interesting, as showing the progress of Christianity in the south, and the readiness with which the Egyptians could blend Christianity with their mythology. In an upper room, about eight feet square, the death and resurrection of Osiris is represented. He is lying on a couch dead, two priests standing, one at each end of the couch, are praying; their hands are uplifted in supplication to a superior power, or to the dead Osiris himself. Then in another part of the scene Osiris has raised himself on his arms, and is restored to life.

Christianity at the close of the first century had spread into southern Egypt, and in the reigns of Domitian and Diocletian many Christians suffered martyrdom, whose graves are yet to be seen at Esneh. This upper room of the temple was either built, or the scene represented on the walls, after the Egyptians had learned the foundation facts of Christianity. There had always been communication between Syene and the north of Egypt, and the travellers to the north from Syene may have learned the truths of Christianity, and returning home taught their fellow citizens. Nor is it unlikely that St. Mark would send teachers, or even go himself with the Gospel of salvation to the people of the remotest city in Egypt? However, it is evident the representation is an Egyptian declaration of the death of Christ, and His resurrection. And the scene being

laid in the upper room indicates a knowledge of the Bible truth of the meeting in the upper room, in which the Lord and His disciples kept the Passover previous to His death. The following legend regarding Osiris, the chief god of the trinity of Philæ, seems also to contain veins of Scriptural truth obtained from contact with the Gospel. Osiris, according to some authorities, signifies "the many-eyed god," and was called "the king of gods," and "the lord of life." He became a man, and reigned as king on earth. Set, the god of evil, murdered him and cut his body into fourteen pieces. Horus, the son of Osiris, slew Set, who is represented as the great serpent Apap. Horus has a shepherd's staff, and with it crushes the head of this monster of evil. Is there not in this legend either the faintest outline of the world's hope, as given in Genesis to all nations where Jehovah says to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head?" or does it not indicate a knowledge of Old Testament history of the sin and expulsion of Adam, and of the promise of God? Horus, the son, avenges the death of his father, and he does this by slaying the serpent with his staff. Here, evidently, is the Egyptian idea of the truth that has been the wonder of men and angels, and the evidence of God's infinite love, "the word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us;"* and of the triumph of Christ by His death over Satan, who is called "the great dragon," "that old serpent, the devil." It was as a shepherd Christ came to save the world, to avenge His Father as the God of holiness, righteousness and truth, and to destroy evil. "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."† This legend may be an evidence of the heathen world's consciousness of the need of a divine Saviour, or it is a feeble utterance of the promise recorded in Genesis, which

* John i. 14. † John x. 11.

became an article of knowledge and of the faith of eastern nations. Thus, through the ages of heathenism, when gross darkness covered the people, and when the life of millions was crushed by the cruelties of kings, God in His mercy gave them the germs of the saving truth of the Bible, and kept alive, in the traditions about their gods, the hope of deliverance from sin, and the trials of their life.

Half-an-hour's sail from Philæ brought the cataract in view, which is about three hundred yards long; the waves dash and foam with considerable force in their rapid descent. In comparison with the Lachine rapids, on the St. Lawrence, the Nile cataract is like a narrow streamlet, flowing down its mountain channel. Four young Nubians and an old man leaped fearlessly into the rolling masses of water. The young fellows seemed to bound from one great wave to another. Sometimes their black, woolly heads would disappear for a moment and suddenly rise above the surface; then again, with their heads lifted completely out of the water, they were borne down by the current. The old man had lost the agility of youth, but either his desire to make a respectable livelihood, or his fondness for the exciting work, kept him at his post. He straddled a piece of palm tree about eight feet long and one foot in diameter, and log and rider were pitched about like straws in the powerful current. They turned many somersaults; sometimes the old black man was up and the log down, and then the log was uppermost and the man under water; but both reached calm water safely. The whole performance was done at the modest rate of one piastre, or about five cents, for each swimmer. Though the thermometer ranged over 90°, the man and boys burrowed, as soon as they came out of the river, in the warm sand, with their teeth chattering, as if it were a cold day of October in Canada. From a poor village, with a few date and dome palms, giving

food and grateful shade to the city, I rode amid a storm of demands for bukshish to the old quarries about a mile from Assouan. Blocks of granite are lying there, perhaps from the time of the builders of the pyramids. From this quarry were taken the immense blocks that line and roof the upper pyramid chamber, and the square pillars that stand in the court of the temple of the Sphinx. The obelisks at On and Thebes, and those that adorn Rome, Paris, London and New York were hewn out of that quarry. The marks of the workmen's tools are clearly seen on the rock and the blocks of stone. One obelisk is lying unfinished, ninety-five feet long and eleven and a-half feet square at the base. A flaw is seen in it, which may account for its not having been removed, and the marks of pointed tools are seen along its whole length. The method of quarrying these massive blocks is indicated at Assouan. Along the face of the block I observed a narrow groove had been cut by a narrow pointed tool. At regular intervals of about three feet, cavities had been cut down about four inches broad, and wedges driven into them and swollen with water; thus the stone was riven from its place. Along the whole length of the unfinished obelisk a groove is cut, and spaces are seen for driving the wedges in to separate it from the rock. From remote times, the Egyptians had a knowledge of metallurgy. The copper mines in Wady Magharah were wrought in the eighteenth dynasty, and the cartouches of kings long prior to that date are found there. Whether their tools were bronze or iron, the Egyptians wrought the beautiful granite and hard basalt with marvellous skill, and gave it a polish not excelled with all the mechanical appliances of these days. The tribes that inhabited the Arabian peninsula had not only gold and silver but iron, and it could scarcely be possible the Egyptians would be ignorant of it. The Hebrews learned among, other things, the knowledge of working stone, and

no doubt there is a reference to the pointed tool used by the stone-cutters when Job prays, "Oh, that my words were graven with an iron pen, and lead in the rock forever." * Jeremiah says, "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron." * This is not the stylus, but an iron tool by which the words might be chiselled into the rock.

The quarries are situated so near the Nile that they could float their blocks of granite and transport them to any part of Egypt. Sometimes they were moved on sledges and dragged by human force. Time and human life were of small value in the eyes of an Egyptian King. The people were not citizens, or subjects, they were slaves, whose comfort, liberty, and life, were to be sacrificed for the glory of the king, or to gratify his barbaric whim. The Oriental, yet, has no idea of the value of time, he passes a dreamy existence and is content with sufficient for his daily need. As fatalists, they are fearless of death, for it is the will of Allah, and the Mahomedan dies without a murmur. Herodotus informs us that a king brought from Elephantine, near Assouan, an edifice of a single block of stone, to Sais. The work consumed three years. The architect wearied with anxiety and labour of moving this colossal block, twenty cubits long, fourteen wide, and eight high, heaved a sigh. This, and because a workman was crushed in the work of moving the stone, caused the king to refuse it admittance to the temple, for which it was destined. This gives us an idea of the time spent in bringing down those granite blocks that excite our admiration for their beauty and size. Those days of slavery have passed forever, and the right or power to crush the joy and life out of men to rear tombs for kings or temples for gods.

* Job xix. 23, 24.

* Jer. xvii. 1.

One naturally asks what will be the future of Egypt; will it become a great political and civilizing power again among the nations? Britain will mould to a large extent the future of Egypt. The British and French comptrollers who managed the finances previous to the late war may have been far from perfection; the system may not have been the best that might have been devised; their salaries may have been excessive. Their rule, however, lifted a galling yoke from the necks of the Fellahin. I speak on the authority of Europeans who have been in Egypt thirty years, and who are acquainted personally with the farming population from Alexandria to Thebes, when I say the taxes were reduced fifty per cent. Besides, the taxes were levied at a fixed rate, and not according to the caprice or cupidity of the government agents, and there began to exist a sense of security against the legion of crushing evils, that had for years devoured the poor tillers of the soil. The Egyptian official class which has no patriotism or conscience, in the east, was restrained from plundering the lower classes, and therefore hated the presence of the Europeans. The military party then arose into power, headed by Arabi Pasha, the supposed leader of a national party. The only national party was the military one, whose aim was not to give the Fellahin a better government, or relief from cruel wrongs, but to drive out the foreigners, rob the public treasury, and squander the money on their own unbridled passions. Arabi therefore aroused the fanatical spirit of the common people, they forgot their benefits from foreign management, their fanaticism became charioteer to their judgment, and they went out to the war simply on the ground of religious bigotry.

Arabi's purpose was to depose the civil power, and rule Egypt by a military despotism. Britain was justified in her action against Arabi, for she had been invited to manage

the finances of the country by the legal authority, and she could not submit to be driven out along with the Khedive by an illegal military power. The telegraph lines and the railways were largely built by British capital; and, unless Britain was prepared to risk her control of the Suez canal and imperil the millions invested, she was forced to interfere herself.

Returning on Sabbath afternoon in company with Dr. Watson from one of the mission schools in Cairo, I heard a cry of warning and on looking round, a runner before a European carriage stopped quite near us. The occupant who alighted from the carriage was a corpulent Egyptian, in European clothes, except a native fez. On inquiry I found this was Arabi, then rising into fame. I afterwards saw him at a supper given on Washington's birth-day in Cairo, at which he made a speech somewhat insulting to the British, and lauding the government and people of the United States, both of whom he hated in his heart. He was corpulent, with a flabby face, not denoting great intellect or courage. He seemed to be about five feet ten inches in height. Wherever he appeared he assumed all the pomp of the Khedive himself, the people prostrated themselves before him in the dust, and before his carriage usually two runners were seen, who cleared the way right and left for the great man. This custom is of great antiquity, and one looks with deep interest on the Sais with his picturesque, gold-and-silver embroidered jacket, with a spotless turban on his head, running for hours before the carriage of some noble. His occupation leads us back to remote times. When Israel became discontented with the method of government by the Judges, they wished to have a king, for they imagined the splendour of royalty would increase their own glory. Samuel warned them of the burdens the king would impose on them, "he will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horse-

men, and some will run before his chariots." * These runners have been known to run for hours without rest, and day after day their familiar cry is heard in Cairo patiently clearing the way through the crowds and then rushing on. Their work demands patience and the power of physical endurance. To the Sais Jeremiah refers when he asks the righteous, "if thou hast run with the footmen and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?" † Paul urges believers to run with patience, and in one passage, speaks of the hope God has given, as like an anchor cast within the veil, whither "the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." ‡ In this office Jesus marks his infinite love for us. To occupy an office so lowly, for our salvation "He took upon him the form of a servant," and humbled himself to become our forerunner, to announce our coming into our Father's home in heaven, and so add to our glory. What greater humility, what greater love than this can be found? He has tasted the suffering and the shame of the cross for us, let us give Him our love, our life, our all.

One of the pressing needs of Egypt is education. At present the people are utterly incompetent to govern themselves. Education in the schools of Egypt consists in committing to memory the Koran. At Edfoo I visited the public school. The walls of the building were of sun-dried clay, without windows, and there were no seats. The scholars sat on the earth floor, swaying their bodies backward and forward, and in a monotonous sing-song tone committed the Koran to memory. The teacher sat on the floor with grave indifference to the babel of noise and confusion in his school. He remained in a sitting posture, when I entered; he asked the scholars to sing, which they did in the deepest gutturals and without the least musical

* Samuel viii. 11.

† Jeremiah xii. 5.

‡ Hebrews vi. 20.

taste. After this performance the scholars rose *en masse* and demanded bukshish, with the heartiest approval of the master, who finally joined in the demands for himself. This is a typical specimen of the schools in the towns and villages on the Nile, and little can be expected from them in the way of imparting useful knowledge or giving mental training.

In Cairo is the famous college, El-Ahzar, which I visited in company with a friend well-known to the Sheik of the college. At the entrance native barbers were shaving the heads of their clients and while plying their trade lifted their eyes to show their fanatical hatred towards us. On passing through the gate we entered a large open area, in which were about five hundred young men. Some were sitting, others lying on their faces reading, others were eating flat pancakes, which appeared anything but inviting; clouds of flies were swarming about, and the race for food was between them and the students, and many a fly went the way of the bread in the famous college. Though in company with the Sheik, so hostile was the feeling at the time, for the war clouds were gathering thickly and Arabi Pasha was threatening to annihilate the British infidel, that the five hundred students rose to their feet and hissed in our faces as if we were dogs. However, as we were in the stronghold of fanaticism, we bore the insult with becoming meekness. Beyond this area we entered a covered hall, in which the students sat on the floor or lay on their faces on mats, in circles, each containing from ten to twelve. The teacher sat with his back against a pillar, while his students repeated the Koran and listened to his explanations. In the centre of each circle was a heap of yellow and red slippers belonging to the students. There was also the same swaying of the body backward and forward as in the small schools. Along this hall were rows of boxes containing the clothes and provisions of each student, many

of whom brought a week's provision, and took it daily until it was done, when a fresh stock was laid in. This is the centre of Egyptian education, it is the hotbed of Mahommedan fanaticism and sways a powerful influence over the Khedive and the army. While these are the educational institutions, Egypt will never rise in material and moral power. Let Egypt be for the Egyptians as Canada is for Canadians, but this will be impossible until a liberal European education is given to the people.

But like every other country Egypt needs Christianity. The moral instruction of the Koran is valuable so far, but it is separated from the spirit of God, who can give power to all truth and make it the means of regulating the heart and life of the Egyptian people. The United Presbyterian Church of the United States have had missionaries in Egypt since 1854. Their work extends from Alexandria to Esneh above Thebes, and the Gospel has been preached in ancient Syene, on the boundary of Nubia. The work is under the management of Dr. Lansing, a man of scholarship, and Christian spirit. The headquarters of the mission are at Cairo, where he is ably supported by Dr. Watson and Mr. Harvy, men of ability and true missionary spirit, who along with their wives and other teachers, native and European, have done much for the Egyptians. In 1881 there were twenty-one missionaries and one hundred and forty-nine native agents in Egypt. There were twelve organized churches, with a membership of one thousand three hundred and six. The contributions of native converts for the year 1881 were \$4,747. The attendance in forty-two Sabbath schools was seven hundred and six adults, and seven hundred and eighty-eight children; and eight hundred and ninety native women were learning to read the Scriptures. There were ten mission schools with an average attendance of eight hundred and fifty-nine, and thirty-nine primary schools,

with an average attendance of 1,360 pupils, and the amount paid by the native Egyptians for the support of these schools was \$6,131. These figures show briefly the results of faithful labour, and some of the forces at work by the Presbyterian Church for the regeneration of that ancient land of the Pharaohs. During 1880 the students in the college in Sioot paid as fees more than \$1,000, besides furnishing their own bread and books. From this College trained Egyptians go out to teach their fellow-countrymen the English branches of education and also the Scriptures. I visited one of these teachers, Awada Abd el Shaheed, in his school at Luxor, which was attended by Copts, Mahommedans and professing Christians. About forty scholars attended in an upper room, very plain. Through holes in the rotten walls I could look out on the mighty Temple of Karnak, and the whole ruins of Thebes, where famous temples stood and despotic kings reigned, but now the name of the Prince of Peace is known, and the Gospel of Christ taught. What has Christianity done for Egypt I have been asked, with an insinuation that it has done nothing? The Copts and Mahommedans are dishonest, filthy in their houses and habits, and grossly ignorant. The converted Egyptians are separated from them by a great gulf. They are clean in their houses, honest in dealing, and strive to live a holy life. In the towns and cities of Egypt there are men and women converted to Christ, whose life is as light in the midst of Mahommedan darkness. They are noted for honesty in trade and truthfulness in speech. Who are those whom the Egyptian Government has placed in offices of trust in many of their post-offices, or on their mail boats on the Nile? They are members of the Christian Church. The captain of the mail boat, Boulak, is a Christian, and many of the postmasters in Upper Egypt whom I met are the same. A Mahommedan will ask four or five times the price of his goods, while the

native Christian will ask a fair value, and his goods are reliable. From the Great Sea to Nubia I have seen these facts and when the Spirit of God shall reign in all her people as now in a handful of them, Egypt shall be a happy if not a mighty country. Isaiah says: "In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord, and it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord."* The Church is the pillar and ground of the truth. The altar and the pillar are not a stone pyramid, but the Church of Christ in Egypt and Christ in the Church, as the life and Saviour of the people. "There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt,"† writes Ezekiel. For more than twenty-two centuries, no native prince has ruled over the land. Are the words of the prophet to be taken literally? If so, while she may be independent of Turkey her rulers will be dependent on some foreign power. What power will it be? Russia, France and Italy were deeply interested in Egypt during the war, but Britain alone sent her troops into the land. What blessing could semi-civilized Russia give, or Catholic Italy, or France with its gross materialism? British guns bombarded Alexandria not to overthrow constitutional government but to maintain it. Britain's aim was not to deprive the people of their rights but to defend them from the covetous hand of a corrupt despotism; for this some of her bravest and noblest sons have fallen, and sleep in that historic land until the great day. God's purpose may be in this. British rule with all its wrongs, is one of justice and mercy; wherever Britain bears sway she recognizes the rights and liberty of the people. Let revolutionists and Britain's foes say what they may, wherever the flag of the kingdom flies freedom and Christianity are sheltered. By the battles of Kass-

* Isaiah xix. 19-20.

† Ezek. xxx. 13.

assin and Tel-el-Kebir the standard of Britain was planted on Egyptian soil, and wherever it is seen the standard of the cross may be lifted. The prophecies of the Scripture have been fulfilled as every traveller may see. "I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate." "It shall be the basest of kingdoms, neither shall it exalt itself any more above



EXTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE OF ISIS, AT PHILÆ.

the nations.”* “The brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up ; the reeds and flags shall wither.”† The brooks are dried up at Memphis and Thebes, or filled with sand during the centuries. Poverty and moral desolation oppress the

* Ezek. xxix. 10, 15. † Isaiah xix. 6.

nation, vice abounds in every class. The Copts will hail the day when Britain will rule the land, and many of the Fellahîn, for they are hopeless of deliverance from their own rulers. Britain's work for the sake of Egypt is to maintain a constitutional government, and give the people useful education in their own language, and, when capable of self-government, let them govern themselves. Let Egypt always be for the Egyptians, but remain with their political independence a part of the British Empire. God seems to have imposed on Britain the task of helping down-trodden Egypt; if she sees her mission and does her duty, peace and righteousness may be found in the fertile land of the Pharaohs. The people will be a free people, and the descendants of those who were slaves in the days of Thothmes and Rameses will enjoy the blessings of Christianity and liberty. Christ will be worshipped in the temples of Osiris, Isis and Amon Ra, and Egypt shall be the Lord's forever.



CHAPTER X.

A RIDE TO MOUNT SINAI.

“The general aspect of the country is one of sheer desolation and barrenness.”—*The Desert of the Exodus*, p. 33.



LL Saturday, February 25th, Arabs from Ghizeh were coming and going with relics which they had dug up at Memphis. I was busy preparing for the start to Suez, and time was precious, but it is a hopeless task to make an Arab hasten. Half a-dozen of them sat outside all day, anxious to show me some prize they had obtained in their excavations among the ruins of some ancient city or temple. My friends were glad when night came, and drove them all away. Our company was small, the Rev. J. G. Smart, of Cambridge, New York, and a Lutheran clergyman; but we were interested in the country, and were ready to endure fatigue and incur danger. Mr. Smart was most enthusiastic in his efforts to examine thoroughly all places of the least importance connected with the history and journey of the Israelites, and I feel indebted to him for his genial spirit and kindness, that frequently helped us through difficulties and dangers. A written contract was duly signed and witnessed at the office of the British consul. Its terms were that, for a certain sum of money, our dragoman would take us safely over the desert, and provide men, camels, and provisions. One must hasten slowly in the East in making bargains. Two days were con-

sumed with our dragoman, whose main object was not our comfort, but to obtain better terms. And no discontented province can press its claims with more skill and perseverance than a Syrian dragoman. At length, after promising a bukshish to every Arab camel-driver and a double one to the greedy dragoman, he shook hands with us, saying "Khalas," it is finished. At the railway station a motley crowd of Egyptians were lounging—men in the scantiest attire, and women decked in necklaces and bracelets of gold and silver. These, together with their nose-jewels and long veils, hiding the lower part of the face, gave them an appearance of barbaric splendour and shabbiness. An officious Egyptian eyed my valise, and resolved evidently not to allow it in the car with me, but as it was neither large nor heavy, I refused to allow it to go into the baggage car. It was full of delicate Egyptian treasures, which I knew would never reach Suez safely. In Egypt, as well as in Canada, the contents of trunks often look as if they had been through a grinding-mill when they emerge from a baggage car. Though I was right and the official wrong, he grew furious at my refusal to hand over my valise to the tender mercies of the Egyptian baggage man. He seemed to think it an insult that an infidel should prevail. I knew the oil, however, that would calm the troubled waters, and gave him a few piastres, which moved him to bless me, and cheered his own soul. Cairo was soon left far behind us. The railway extends through a fertile country to Nefisheh, from which the main line extends southward, skirting the edge of the desert, to Suez. Our route lay through the ancient Goshen, and it was delightful, after the barrenness of southern Egypt and Nubia, to see extensive fields of grain and forests of date palms stretching as far as the eye could see in every direction.

Before reaching Kanatir, on the south of the railway are

the ruins of Tel-el-Yehûdiyeh, the traditional site of the temple erected by Onias, son of the high priest in Jerusalem. According to Josephus, it was built on the foundations of an Egyptian temple. The name of Rameses III. has been recently found among the excavations made, but now the ancient temple and the Jewish are alike a mass of ruins, and the high mound of rubbish alone remains to mark the site. At noon we reached Zakazik, one of the most important centres of trade in the Delta. Cotton and grain are grown in this region in large quantities, and forwarded to Alexandria and thence to Europe. The sources of the fresh water canals are here, that made the land of Goshen so fertile in the days when the patriarch and his family dwelt in the land. For miles on both sides of the railway, canals and small lakes are to be seen. Their banks are lined with trees of various kinds, in many places meeting at the top, and forming a complete shade to prevent evaporation during the intense heat of summer. Large gardens are well cultivated in a few places near Zakazik, in which orange trees and vines grow luxuriantly. The whole of this part of the Delta is capable of producing immense quantities of grain and fruit and excellent pasture. One regards this region with intense interest, because of its connection with the early history of the Scriptures. Here the pioneers of the Hebrew people found a home, and the condition of the country even now, after many centuries and wars, is a standing evidence of the truth of the Scriptures, for the country is well watered, and, as some of those canals that intersect the country date back at least to the time of Rameses, they probably were dug by the Israelites under the lash of the Egyptian taskmasters. Their life was made bitter in all manner of service in the field, digging canals, irrigating the soil, and making brick for the walls of temple enclosures or palaces of the kings. A few minutes' walk from the station are the ruins of Bubastis, an old town, whose chief deity was

Pasht, whose famous temple was here. Herodotus gives a description of the town and temple, and the licentious scenes at the festivals of the goddess; as many as 700,000 men and women frequently assembling, on those occasions, from all parts of Egypt. Nothing now remains of the temple and its splendour but heaps of earth, pottery, and stones. The temple, the idolatry, and the people have perished, and its thorough desolation is a witness of the eternal truth of God's word, which says: "The young men of Aven and of Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword, and their cities shall go into captivity."* Some of the ancient kings instead of executing criminals sent them to their native cities, and compelled them to labour in raising the foundations of the city above the water-level during the overflow of the Nile. If the moral character of the people be determined by the height of the city above the plain, the Bubastians must have been a lawless set of Egyptians, for the ruins are of considerable height. Herodotus says it was raised so high that the people could look over the walls into the temple. From this point the railway extends along the line of an old canal to Nefisheh and Ismaylia. The whole country north to Mansûra and Tanis, the ancient Zoan, is very fertile, and capable of supporting a dense population; and, as the Egyptians were averse, as a race, to rural life and occupation, the conditions were very favourable to the rapid increase of the Hebrews in Egypt. The soil was capable of producing ample food, and until the Hebrews became so numerous as to be a cause of fear to the king, they were regarded as a useful class of people, whose labour augmented the wealth of the kingdom. The conditions were specially favourable to produce the results stated in the Scriptures: "They grew and multiplied exceedingly."

* Jeremiah xxx. 17.

At Tel-el-Kebir the desert begins. This village stands in the centre of a few patches of green, and surrounded by a few trees. Some authorities have regarded this as the site of Pithom one of the treasure-houses built by the Israelites. Lepsius has located the site of Raamses near the railway station, Raamses, at Tell-el-Maskhuta, situated in the heart of a dreary desert, which extends southward to Suez. Only a few small huts compose the modern Raamses ; mounds of sand were piled up around the village by the winds from the south, and a few small shrubs were struggling for existence in the face of scorching winds, sand drifts, and drought. Small patches of land, ten or twelve feet square, were cultivated with great difficulty. Beneath the stunted palm trees that grew on these irrigated squares, a few boys of Raamses had lighted a fire of reeds to cook their scanty meal or to warm themselves. As the train rushed past, they lifted their tarboosh, as Canadian boys would do their caps, but with far less boyish enthusiasm ; for the Fellahin feel the crushing burdens of a cursed government, and the evil descends to the children, who are made toiling slaves at an age when they should be free to develop bodily and mentally into strong and wise men. From this cause the Egyptians are physically weak, and are incapable of self-government or progress until some higher races infuse higher principles into their laws, their social customs, and their moral nature. These patches are irrigated in the same manner as in southern Egypt : a small channel conveys the water through these squares, separated from each other by a raised ridge of earth. When the owner wishes to water one square, he breaks an opening with his feet, and the water flows into it ; when it has sufficient, he breaks with his foot an opening into another square, and in this manner the whole area is watered. This method of irrigating the soil in small squares seems to be of great antiquity. In urging the Israelites to

keep His commandments, God reminds them of the superiority of the land of Palestine, which they possessed through His grace. The land "is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowdest thy seed and wateredst it with thy foot."*

Since the above lines were written, an important topographical discovery has been made at Tell-el-Maskhuta. M. Naville, an eminent Swiss Egyptologist, has been appointed by the "Egyptian Exploration Society" to examine some of the mounds in Egypt that have long been known to scholars to contain antiquities and inscriptions that might solve many historical and topographical problems. He has received the sanction and aid of the present Khedive. The mounds of Tell-el-Maskhuta have been opened, and in the short space of a few weeks very important discoveries have been made. Inscriptions have been found which prove this to be the site of Pithom, one of the two treasure-cities or store-houses built by the Hebrews, and which are mentioned in the first chapter of Exodus. It has been found that Pithom—Pa-Tum—was the religious or sacred name, and Succoth-Thukut the civil name of the city, and that Ramses II. was its founder. During his reign, therefore, the Hebrews were oppressed, and this fact helps to fix the date of the exodus, and bring the statements of Scripture within the domain of verified historic fact, which is indisputable. This treasure-city seems to have been rebuilt under the Ptolemies, and was converted by the Romans into a fortified camp. During this period it was known as Heroöpolis, or "the store-city," from "Hero," the Greek form of "Ar," a store-house. Among the most interesting discoveries are vast subterraneous store chambers. They occupied the whole area enclosed by the city walls, which appears to have

* Deut. xi. 10.

been a square, each of whose sides was six hundred and fifty feet. These chambers have been strongly built, like all the structures of the ancient Egyptians. The chambers are separated by partitions from eight to ten feet in thickness, and the large sun-dried bricks are as perfect as when placed there by the Hebrews, whose "lives were made bitter with hard bondage in mortar and in brick." The value of this discovery cannot be over-estimated, for it has thrown *hors de combat* all sceptical theories in regard to the facts related in Exodus about the treasure-houses, and helps to determine the date of the Exodus itself, the starting-point of the people, and their route towards the wilderness. The Christian Church throughout the world owes a debt of gratitude to the Society and to M. Naville, which it can remove, in some degree, by helping to carry on the work, until the whole Delta shall have given up its rich treasures of antiquity, that will materially aid the historian and the philologist, but above all, from their grave of ages will testify that the "Word of our God shall stand for ever."

The moon cast her silvery light over the desert long before Suez was reached. I stood on the platform, and looked out on the waste over which the Israelites had fled from the slavery of Egypt. It needed faith and courage to march over that terrible desert, even when liberty was the reward. At eight p.m. we arrived at Suez, where our company parted for the night. I slept at the Hotel d' Orient, the name of which is high-sounding enough, but the food was bad and the bed worse.

The starting point of the Israelites and their route in their departure from Egypt have an important relation to the place at which they passed through the sea. It is highly probable the area of ancient Goshen is included in the triangle formed by a line drawn from Heliopolis to lake Timsah, thence north-

ward to Pelusium, and a line from Heliopolis to Tanis. That it was east of the Nile and its main branches seems to be a reasonable inference from the absence of any reference to it in the travels of Jacob and his sons and in the flight of the Israelites from the land. If Tanis, as I believe, was the capital at the date of the exodus, Goshen would be east and south of it and yet near enough to have intercourse with the court of the king. In this area we naturally look for the starting place of the Israelites. The brief statement of the Scriptures is, "the children of Israel removed from Rameses and pitched in Succoth and they departed from Succoth and pitched in Etham, which is in the edge of the wilderness. And they removed from Etham and turned again into Pi-Hahiroth which is before Baal-Zephion; and they pitched before Migdol."* Rameses, the starting point, has been located at Heliopolis, at Tell-Yehudiyeh, at Tell-Maskhuta and at Tanis. One statement of Exodus helps to determine the rendezvous of the Hebrews, "God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines though that was near."† This land lay eastward of Pelusium and therefore not near Heliopolis or any city in the south or southwest of the Delta. And it cannot be Maskhuta, near the edge of the wilderness, which has now been discovered to be the site of Pithom. Tanis, the Zoan of Scripture, and the capital of the Hyksos kings, was enlarged and beautified by Rameses II. There the kings of the nineteenth dynasty had their court and on the statues and blocks of stone that have been found by the officers of the Egypt Exploration Fund, during the past few weeks, are the names of Rameses II., Shishak and Meneptah. The ancient Egyptian name of the place was T'an as seen from an inscription in the Bulak Museum. The

* Numbers xxxiii. 5-7.

† Exodus xiii. 17.

scriptural name is Zoan and the modern, Sâh. It was not until Rameses had enlarged the city and temples that it was called "Pa-Ramesu" (the abode of Rameses). A contemporary of the king is greatly delighted with the country and the capital, "I arrived at the city of Ramesu-Meriamen and found it admirable; here is the seat of the court. The place is pleasant to live in, its fields are full of good things, the meadows are green with vegetables, melons with a taste like honey, grow in the irrigated gardens. The barns are full of wheat and durra and reach as high as heaven."* In speaking of the removal of the plague of locusts it is said, "the Lord turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts and cast them into the Red Sea."† The west wind is literally "the wind of the sea," that is the Mediterranean, and a wind blowing from that sea would drive the locusts from Tanis towards the Red Sea. There the miracles were wrought by Moses before Pharaoh, "marvellous things did he in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan."‡ Near the capital the Hebrews were employed, for they met Moses on coming out from the king, and charged him with adding to their burdens by arousing the anger of the Egyptians. The facts of history in the life of Rameses point to the causes of the tremendous oppression of the Israelites. He employed them in erecting those statues and blocks whose ruins have been found, in making brick and lifting up large stones into their place in the temples, and in cultivating the soil to maintain himself and his nobles in luxury, and their bondage became so galling that they cried unto the Lord for help. The evidence of ancient records, recent discoveries, and the statements of Scripture point to Tanis as the capital of Rameses. If this were the starting

* Rawlinsons' History of Ancient Egypt: Vol. II. 327.

+ Exodus x. 19.

‡ Psalm lxxviii. 12.

place of the Israelites, they would naturally take the shortest route to the wilderness. Their first encampment was Succoth which has been identified with Pithom, the modern Tell-el-Maskhuta and the second Etham. If Zoan-Tanis were the starting point it is highly probable Etham was near El-Kantara, on the Suez Canal, for the well-known route to Syria passed there, which they would prefer to take, rather than plunge into the unknown tracts of the desert. A line of fortifications had been built by Rameses' father, from Pelusium to Heliopolis, to protect the country from the invasion of the desert tribes. It would pass over this narrow strip of land between lakes Balah and Menzaleh, and a fortress would probably be erected there, for it was the key of the whole country. This would therefore be Etham, "the fortress," in the edge of the wilderness. The host of the Hebrews could have forced their way in spite of the fortress and Egyptian soldiers, but fierce struggles with the people along the coast of the Mediterranean would have discouraged them, so God commanded them to turn round at Etham, "lest the people repent when they see war and they return to Egypt."*

But the question to be determined is this, is the Rameses of Exodus, the starting point of the Israelites in their escape from Egypt identical with Pa-Ramesu, or Tanis? In the light of this recent discovery it would have been utterly impossible for them to have reached Succoth, the modern Tell-el-Maskhuta in one day's march. May not the Rameses from which they started be the other treasure city which they had built for Rameses II.? And as the site of Pithom is discovered in the south eastern part of the Delta, it is highly probable that Rameses also would be in this same region and west of Pithom. There are numerous mounds of ruins near Tel-el-

* Exodus xiii. 17.

Kebir and in other places along the line of the railway, between Zakazik and Tell-el-Maskhuta that may speedily be found to be Rameses, the other treasure city. This would bring Succoth, or Tell-el-Maskhuta, within one day's march of their starting point; for even if Rameses were west of Zakazik, the people, by travelling day and night could easily reach Tell-el-Maskhuta. On the whole, therefore, Rameses of the Exodus most probably was situated in the south of the Delta. This situation is the most probable, from the recent known data in our possession, and satisfies the conditions required by the statements of the Bible, and annihilates the theory of Brugsch and other opponents of the Scriptures, who regarded Tanis as the ancient Rameses and placed Succoth and Etham in the north-eastern part of the Delta in order to falsify, if possible, the statements of Exodus in regard to the miraculous passage through the sea. The Hebrews turned southward and encamped before Pi-hahiroth. If Pi-hahiroth be an Egyptian word, it may signify "the place of sedge;" if it be purely Hebrew it may mean "the entrance to the caverns." What were these caverns? In my opinion they were the lakes between Suez and El Gisir which is the highest point of land between the Mediterranean and the Red seas and the probable site of Etham. A day's march from El Gisir, north of lake Timsâh, would bring the Israelites to the bitter lakes near Suez, for they would travel day and night, by forced marches, to escape the king and his army. Among the valuable monuments found in the mounds of Tell-el-Maskhuta, by M. Naville, is an historical tablet of Ptolemy Philadelphus, on which is discovered, for the first time, on Egyptian monuments, the name of a locality called Pi-Keheret, probably the Pi-hahiroth of Exodus. If they are identical, then it is probable the locality was in the neighbourhood of Tell-el-Maskhuta, and to the east or south. A few weeks' further efforts may locate definitely this important

point, which will determine, to a considerable extent, the place at which the Israelites crossed from Egypt into the Desert.

At Pi-hahiroth the Israelites were before the face of Baal-Zephon, and Migdol and also near the sea. Suppose they reached Pi-hahiroth, and then, on discovering that they were pursued, they would yet have a part of the third day to march until night, when they would reach the sea, through which they finally passed. Thus ample time would be afforded to march from El-Gizr to the point of crossing at the promontory of Ras-Adabiyeh, south of Suez. Writers who deny the miracle refuse to admit that they crossed at this point, but at the bitter lakes themselves. The terms used by the sacred writer are utterly unsuitable to the waters of Lake Timsah or those south of it. There is no evidence that any important change has taken place in the formation of the isthmus since the passage of the Hebrews. Those lakes were not influenced by the tide, and the waters could not be divided like walls on both sides by the influence of an east or south-east wind; so that natural agencies would not account for the opening of a way through the waters. Besides, the lakes are shallow, and the hosts of the Egyptians could not by any possibility have all perished, for if they went into the waters one chariot abreast, and each chariot and horse required at least five yards, the length of the line would have been 3,000 yards, which is more than the breadth of the lakes. Besides, the king would not start out with chariots alone; the foot soldiers played an important part in Egyptian wars, and doubtless thousands of them would accompany the chariots. Josephus, quoting Jewish tradition, says "50,000 horsemen and 20,000 footmen pursued the Israelites."* And within historic times there has been no great change in the form of the isthmus; for the canal dug by

* Josep. Ant., ii. 15.

Rameses II., from Bubastis to Lake Timsah, thence to a point near modern Suez, was partly utilized in digging the present Suez Canal, and traces of it are yet visible. Guided by the cloud, they would pass by the western spur of Jebel Atâka, and passing into Wady Tawarik they reached the sea which hemmed them in the front, the Egyptians in the rear and Atâka mountains on their right and left. In this way they were before Baal-Zephon, "Baal of the north," the name given to Atâka, because it was the most northerly mountain range in Egypt. Or the Phœnicians who navigated the sea may have had a temple of Baal on Atâka, which was called Migdol, "the watch tower," as the first object the sailors saw on their return, as the Greek sailors saw the statue of Athena on the Acropolis. And as Baal was the god of the Phœnicians and Syrians, whose home was in the north country, the mountain devoted to his worship would naturally be named Baal of the north, or Baal-Zephon. The language of Scripture is suitable to the deep waters of the sea, and later Hebrew writers declare the passage was through the Red Sea, which was known as the Gulf of Suez. The tradition of thirty centuries is on the side of the view that they went through the sea south of Suez. The local names bear traces of the presence and deliverance of the people at that point. Jebel Atâka signifies "the mount of deliverance," and Wady Tawarik is "the valley of the night-wanderers," referring doubtless to the night marches by the guidance of the pillar of fire. Opposite this point, on the shore of Arabia are "Wady Reiyâneh," "the valley of the people," "Wady Kurdhiyeh," "the valley of the congregation," "Wady Sudr," the valley "leading out of the water." In these local names there lingers on both sides of the Gulf of Suez the recollection of the deliverance of the people, and their march through the divided waters by the power of Jehovah. From Ras Adabiyeh to Ain Mûsa is a distance of seven or eight

miles, the water is from six to forty feet deep. As I sailed almost in a direct line from this promontory, at low tide, sand-bars were visible to the west of the entrance to the ship canal. A strong south-east wind, when the tide was ebbing would drive the waters towards Suez, and thus an open way be made for the Israelites on the sand bars, and the water would be heaped up like a wall on both sides of them. Thus by the help of natural laws Jehovah saved the people. In Egypt the plagues were natural evils intensified. Locusts and frogs and lice were common evils, and are so to this day. They became miracles because inflicted by Divine command, and at a special time announced by Moses, and as a specific penalty for disobedience. So at Suez, Jehovah used natural laws for the escape of the Hebrews as he had used natural laws for the punishment of the Egyptians. "The Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, . . . and the waters were divided . . . the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left."* A south-east wind blowing all night would heap up the waters in the Bay of Suez like walls on the one side while the ebbing tide would force the waters back in the Gulf, and leave a passage open for the Hebrews to go over. Such a wind would not have divided the waters of the Bitter Lakes. Moreover the language of Scripture referring to the Egyptians is "the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters,"† which could not, on any rational grounds of interpretation, apply to those shallow bodies of water. The Hebrews could have crossed by the caravan route, a few miles north of Suez, but the Egyptians would have captured them, unless Jehovah had wrought some other miracle to save them and punish the Egyptians, and in order to do both He led them through the gulf south of Suez.

* Exod. xiv. 21, 22. † Exod. xv. 10.

The march of the Hebrews had begun probably before the king was informed of it. Menepthah was in Memphis fortifying it and Heliopolis, for Marmaiu, an African chief, had invaded Egypt from the west with 40,000 men. This would account for his absence from the capital at the time of their departure, and it is probable this circumstance, along with the confusion and alarm at the impending calamity afforded an opportunity to escape without opposition.

Suez is a miserable town of a few thousand inhabitants chiefly French, Italians, Germans, and English, with a few hundred Egyptians. The streets are laid out at right angles for the most part, and the houses are built after the European model. At the outskirts of the town are small, wretched hovels occupied by Egyptians. This town and Port Said are the sinks into which have collected the most wicked of the land, and the bulk of the European population is by no means an example which the Egyptians may follow with advantage. We were to start at one o'clock on Tuesday, the 8th of February. I had bought a large quantity of tobacco for distribution among our camel-drivers during the journey through Arabia. As I was having this taken to the boat I found our dragoman had been worshipping Bacchus and was unable to start. Finally, when the wind and tide were favourable to set sail, one of my companions was missing. He had been purchasing in the bazaars necessities for the journey, and, like a child, had forgotten the hour of starting. After much delay we all embarked, and now assured ourselves there was no chance of a further hitch, when suddenly, at the last moment, our Egyptian sailors struck for an increase of wages, otherwise they would not start. Shouting and wild gesticulation began, which ceased only by a capitulation on the part of our dragoman. On landing at Ain Mûsa, on the coast of Arabia, began my acquaintance with the camels, the locomo-

tives of the desert. My attachment for them increased daily, for unless too heavily laden, or jaded with long marches, or driven too far without water, I found them tractable enough. The camel, I thought, would be more or less influenced by its owner; my selection was made, therefore, by the face of the men. One of the Towarah Arabs had a good face. It is true it was tanned and wrinkled like a mummy, but there was a mild and intelligent expression that pleased me. In Canada I knew a good carter prides himself in possessing a good horse. I thought, therefore, that in Arabia a good Arab would probably have a good camel, and I was not disappointed. The saddle was wooden, padded with a cushion, which was made softer by the addition of a heavy tweed coat. In front and rear of the saddle is a wooden stake ornamented with brass. At times I placed one leg across the camel's shoulder, and then the other, and when a change was required, placed my feet in the stirrups. This saddle and a bridle, of rope, ornamented with a few pieces of flashily-coloured cloth, composed the whole harness. The distance to the springs of Ain Mûsa was about two miles. After having seated myself in the saddle, the camel raised himself on his hind knees with a sudden jerk, like a monster automaton worked by springs, which would have sent me over his neck but for a firm grasp of the projection of the saddle; then as suddenly he reared himself in front, and I was pitched up to an elevation that suggested danger and broken bones. In half an hour Ain Mûsa was reached, the tents were pitched, the eleven baggage-camels were lying in a circle a short distance from the tents, the sheik and his men were in a circle, warming themselves at a fire of dried shrubs, which crackled and flashed for a moment. Our black cook, Abdullah, was doing his best, under the management of the dragoman, to prepare supper. There are a few wells of brackish water

here for irrigating the enclosed gardens in which are palms, tamarisks, and acacias, and a few patches of grain and vegetables. The gardens are enclosed by a rude paling, three or four feet high. Though the water is brackish, it is used for drinking, and indeed, previous to the fresh water canal, this was the chief source of supply for Suez.

Eight or ten miles eastward the range of Jebel Raha runs parallel with the shore, forming the wilderness of Shur and separating it from the centre of the peninsula. After supper, for the first time in the desert, I went out of the tent and beyond the noise of our men. Across on the Egyptian shore I could trace the dark outline of the Atâka mountains, and the moanings of the restless sea, as the waves dashed on the shore, echoed far over the silent desert. Everything was still as the tomb. At a distance I could see the light flickering through the small openings in the tent, in which were my two companions. At a short distance from the tent, and near a few lonely graves, a fire was blazing, and by its light I could see the weird and wrinkled faces of our men, and a small cloud of smoke hovering about them from their pipes. The feeling I will never forget. Far from country and home, in the hands of men who were more than usually dangerous, because of the war feeling that was arousing the fanaticism of their Egyptian co-religionists, in the silence of that desert, and covered with darkness, I felt lonely and desolate in the extreme. This spot had been the witness of the wonders of Jehovah and the doom of the Egyptians. Here the Israelites saw the Egyptian dead strewn along the shore in the morning. Here, too, were sung those triumphant words: "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power; Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy."* Probably from these wells

* Exodus xv. 6.

the Israelites took their supply of water in goat-skins, as every traveller across the desert does now, which would have served them three days, until they reached Marah. If they crossed, as Brugsch supposes, at Lake Menzaleh, the bitter lakes would be Marah and Ain Mûsa, probably Elim. Tradition and the rational interpretation of Scripture history forbid our belief in the theory which maintains, without evidence, that the passage was through the shallow fords north of Suez.

OUR MARCH INTO THE HOWLING WILDERNESS.

At five a.m., the following morning, breakfast was finished : though not overly attractive, the bracing air gave us an excellent appetite. The loads must be packed and adjusted on the backs of the camels to suit the camel drivers, in doing which there was no small confusion. Time was precious to us but not to an Arab, hence it was nine a.m. before the camels left the encampment. Meanwhile we had started on foot, and like Moses and the Israelites, began our journey in the wilderness of Shur. Raha like a wall hemmed us in on one side and the sea on the other. I thought of the march of the delivered Hebrews long centuries before over this same ground. They were thankful for the victory at the sea, but doubtless fearful of this waterless, lifeless desert. Our route lay near a mound to the south of Ain Mûsa, on which is a solitary palm; the sand was very fine, and as I was trying to imagine the feelings of the Hebrews when looking out on this same desolate scene, one of my companions said "what splendid building sand this is;" thus does the American look with his practical mind upon the most sacred places. All day there appeared mirages for miles. Sheets of calm water and forests of palms seemed to lie across our route. As we came near however they vanished, and nothing remained but stunted shrubs and the desert sand. The

steady heat of the sun oppressed us all day, conversation ceased, and the Arabs were quiet and marched along in silent meditation, only the regular, monotonous tread of the camels broke the silence that reigned on every side. We crossed a number of wadies, the shallow beds of winter torrents; at noon our lunch was eaten near some small shrubs along the edge of Wady Sudr. One feels thankful for the least protection, in many places, against the heat and glare of the fierce sun. Daily at noon a halt was made, and shelter sought behind some shrubs or the overhanging ledge of some range of hills where we gathered ourselves up in the smallest possible bulk. Often I felt the full meaning of the promise of God to his people, "Neither shall the heat nor sun smite them;"* and God has promised to the Church safety from her foes, and joy in Christ in language the force of which one realizes in that desert as nowhere else, "A man shall be as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."† A mat was spread on the sand, one of the company sat on the sand at each side of the mat, while our dragoman served us. Frequently the wind blew violently up the narrow wadies and covered us with clouds of fine sand; it was necessary therefore to eat in haste; so turning our back to the wind we quickly finished our meal, gave the remnants and a mouthful of water to our camel drivers, mounted our camels and hastened forward.

Starting from Wady Werdan, our company was complete, consisting of "Salamah," the Sheik, our dragoman, and cook Abdullah, two boys ten years old, nine Arabs, eleven camels and our company. Abdullah, the cook, was as black as polished ebony; he was the possessor of only one eye, the other having been put out in some early battle in which he figured. His abiyah was of the finest silk with coloured

* Isaiah xlix. 10. † Isaiah xxxiii. 3

stripes extending from his neck to his feet. He had become the owner of a European dress coat, but had removed the sleeves. This he wore over his outer gown. The whole exterior of Abdullah was a vain effort to unite Oriental and European styles into a harmonious whole; the result was that Abdullah, who was the swell of the whole Arab servants, cut a ridiculous figure. And as he sat on the camel with a fowl in his hands picking its feathers and scattering them about him, and the carefully polished brass buttons of his mutilated dress coat reflecting the sun's rays like small mirrors, he afforded us frequent amusement. He was gentle as a child, and very patient under his difficult duties. Frequently, however, he was supplied by our dragoman with brandy, then his hand became unsteady, and as one eye had to do the work of two, Abdullah was guilty of putting into the cooking vessel what ought to have been thrown away, and throwing on the sand what should have been in the pot. On such occasions he was summoned into the tent, and when we had shown him the folly of so acting and the injury to us, he always repented in the utmost humility, only to repeat the same thing. Altogether he was a faithful old man, and our final parting was with mutual regret.

Towards the close of our second day's march the Hammam Far'un Hills were seen. Our route was covered with flat pieces of mica that glittered like silver in the sunlight. Before us the range of low hills on our right inclined northward and seemed to block our line of march. The wady was narrow and we were hemmed in by limestone ridges bleached and calcined by the weather and heat, and here and there covered by wreaths of sand. Beyond, where the wady widens into the form of an amphitheatre I saw a few stunted palms and shrubs on an elevation thirty or forty feet above the surrounding level. This is the traditional site of Marah,

whose waters the Hebrews could not drink, for they were bitter. There are two wells here, one about eight feet in diameter, the smaller one about two feet in diameter, and seemed modern. They were both filled with sand, but a halt was made and one well cleaned out to a considerable depth. The water I obtained from it was tepid and brackish. Dr. Robinson spells the modern name Ain Hawâra, "the spring of destruction." Professor Palmer calls it Ain Hawwârah, "a small pool." Is this the Marah of Scripture? It is the only water between Ain Mûsa and this spot, and if the Hebrews started from the former they could easily have reached the latter place in three days. In my opinion they could have gone much further, and this fact may seem to add weight to the opinion that Wady Gharandel is the Marah of Scripture. But on the morning after the deliverance, they would not be in readiness to march, nor would there be need to hasten as in Egypt, for their enemy had perished. Besides the song of deliverance, as given in Exodus xv., was sung on the day after their passage through the sea, so that probably not more than two full days were taken in the journey to Marah. One hour's ride from Marah brought us to Wady Gharandel, the supposed site of Elim, but, according to Lepsius, the site of Marah. There are two strong objections that may be urged against Ain Hawwârah: unless the well was much larger than now it could not quench the thirst of 600,000 men, their families and flocks, and we would naturally have expected the "wells of Marah" instead of the "waters of Marah" for the two that are to be seen are springs, or wells supplied from springs. The first objection may be answered by stating the fact that the murmuring of the Israelites does not seem to have been universal. We are told the people murmured, whereas on future occasions it is said the whole congregation murmured. Moses, who knew the country, would have made every possible

provision for carrying water. Would not the women, and multitudes of youth have means of carrying water for themselves in addition to the quantity carried for the whole host on the backs of the animals they had taken out of Egypt? Ordinary prudence would demand this, and if it were done we have a reason why the murmuring was only partial, for only the thoughtless or those who were helpless would depend entirely on the general supply. It is highly probable there was a larger rainfall at the date of the exodus than now, and the wells may have been much larger than now, after they have been filled up with sand during the centuries, and their surface contracted. Moses casting a tree into the waters would seem to indicate a larger body of water than these wells. We have no reason to believe that trees of great size ever grew in this part of the desert, and it was probably one of those shrubs that yet grow here and in Wady Gharandel. Burkhardt supposes it to have been the Gharkad which grows near the wells. May it not have been the Tarfa bush, which grows to a considerable size at Gharandel? This would give it a sweeter taste at least than the natural brackish one. Josephus has added to the Scriptural account some later tradition, or one that had come through another source than the Hebrews. He says: "Moses took the top of a stick that lay down at his feet, and divided it in the middle, and made the section lengthwise. He bid the strongest among them that stood there to draw up water, and told them that when the greatest part was drawn up, the remainder would be fit to drink."* In a similar way he has embellished the miracle of Elisha in healing the waters at Jericho. There would be no difficulty in the heads of a family taking a sufficient supply for three days for themselves and their children. Water and food would be the two most

* Josep. Ant. iii. 1-3.

important items for the journey, and every one able would be pressed into the service, women and children. Only the thoughtless among the Hebrews and the mixed multitude that came with them would be likely to make no ample provision for the march. This seems probable, for in the following account of their murmuring between Elim and Sinai, "the whole congregation of the children of Israel was guilty." This I think is worthy of notice as a solution of the manifest difficulty which every traveller must feel in regard to Marah. Only a part were already overcome with thirst, and Moses would naturally regulate the quantity given to each family, and thus they could reach Elim.

A ride of two hours brought us into Wady Gharandel, the traditional site of Elim. It is about one-fourth of a mile in breadth, and extends south-west to the sea. Its banks are from ten to fifty feet high. From a hill on the opposite side from our encampment, I had a fine view of the African shore on the other side of the Gulf. Jebel Hamman and Gharandel were all aglow with purple, and gold-gilded with the fading rays of the sun. Near the tent a stream of water, eight feet wide and a few inches deep, was flowing slowly down its channel; while in the centre of the wady the ground was moist and reeds were growing in abundance. The Tarfa wood and the Gharkad were in abundance, the former from eight to twenty feet high. Here our dragoman had the goat skins and other vessels filled with water. At night the moon and stars shone down on these old hills and sandy desert over which the pillar of cloud and fire had stood, and on this very ground Moses and the hosts of Israel must have encamped, and looked with glad hearts on the water and green vegetation of Elim. In the early morning it rained for five minutes, but only the faintest specks on the sand were visible at sunrise. A violent wind storm arose during the night, and as it swept wildly

down the wady our tent began to sway to and fro, and we were awakened by the men driving the tent pegs deeper into the sand, and felt thankful that they were not driving them into our temples like Jael into the temples of Sisera. Late the previous evening our men sat round a blazing, crackling fire of scented shrubs, and were talking over their experience at Cairo and Suez, and of their possessions of camels or palm trees. Their conversations were conducted with oriental gravity, as they smoked their long-stemmed pipes, while the boys and younger men listened to the wisdom of their elders with submissive reverence. Riding down Gharandel to the sea I counted forty-three palms, and eight wells of water, some of which were filled with sand, but from others the water was oosing out at the surface. Some of the palms were of considerable height, others were low and bushy. Between our tent and the sea a ridge extended down the centre of the wady, thus forming a water channel on each side. A number of streams of clear water exist here, one of which was about fourteen feet broad and six inches deep. In many places the ground was boggy and vegetation rank. During a ride of three hours to the sea our route lay through shrubs and reeds in profusion; and flowers of delicate hue and sweet fragrance were blooming in beauty. To us as to the Hebrews it was as paradise in the heart of the barren desert.

Doubt lingers about this as about every spot in the desert wanderings of the Hebrews. Laborde was of opinion that Wady Useit, the next beyond this, is Elim. Lepsius supported the claims of Shubeikeh, the third wady beyond Gharandel, and down which probably the Hebrews went to the sea. As Jebel Hamman rises abruptly from the sea, the passage was impossible there, along the coast. Hence they must have crossed inland over Wadies Useit, Thal, Shubeikeh and Tayibeh. The above authors regard Gharandel as Marah. This theory

seems untenable, for the Hebrews would naturally stop at such a favourable spot as Gharandel and take in supplies for their future marches. There is no reason to believe that any important change has taken place since the passage of the Hebrews that would affect either the quantity or quality of the water at Gharandel. There would have been sufficient water to supply the Hebrews, and therefore there was no cause of murmuring. Now also there is far more water in Gharandel than in Useit, or Shubeikeh. Why then should they have murmured for water where it was most abundant, and not do so where the supply was less? Besides, though the water in Gharandel is slightly brackish, its taste is not unpleasant; I enjoyed it. Had this been Marah, the people perishing of thirst would have never dreamed of complaining of its bitterness. They would have drank it gladly without any miracle by Moses. The Bible statement is brief: "In Elim were twelve fountains of water, and three score and ten palm trees." In Wady Useit I counted twenty palms, and at the end of the wady near the sea is a small quantity of water, but none at the part over which the Hebrews would naturally pass. In Wady Tayibeh there was the faintest trace of water. The term "springs or fountains" can be applied with propriety only to Gharandel, and the number of such fountains all along it makes it probable that this was ancient Elim. Dean Stanley says Gharandel, Useit, or Tayibeh, must be Elim. The claims of the first, for the reasons already given, are by far the strongest for the honour of being the camping place of the Hebrews.

At the exit from Wady Gharandel, on the plain at the sea shore, the hills shelved down at a sharp angle towards the sea, the streams of water from the wady soon disappeared in the sand plain, which is about six or eight miles broad. The hot springs are at the base of the hills which descend abruptly to the sea. Hot steam issued from caverns that penetrated the

hills in the direction of the strata, the soil was dark and spongy, and the atmosphere emitted a strong smell of sulphur. I asked the Arabs about these springs. They said: "Our Lord Moses crossed here from Egypt. Pharaoh who pursued him perished in the sea, and his spirit keeps these springs continually boiling, and every ship which comes near the shore will meet certain destruction." I asked our sheik where Moses went from this place. He replied: "Our Lord Moses went with his people to Ain Mûsa, there he put his staff into the earth in a number of places, and the present wells were produced. From Ain Mûsa Moses went to Cairo," and the sheik at this point had exhausted all his knowledge of Moses. On enquiry about the tree which Moses cast into the waters at Marah, the sheik and his men knew nothing about it, but said Moses cast his staff into the water and it became sweet: "A great man in the mountains near Petra gave Moses this wonder-working staff, which also was given to Mahommed and all the Prophets." This hoary tradition of the desert tribes preserves the outline of the great fact of Moses' passage through the sea, the defeat of Pharaoh and the deliverance of the Hebrews, and so far verifies Bible truth, though confounding details and localities. Our route lay up Wady Useit to the place where our baggage had passed early in the morning. The bed of the wady was covered with small pebbles and pieces of flint; the hills on both sides were bleached by the weather, and the powerful reflection of the light almost blinded us. As we ascended we were forced to climb ledges from four to eight feet high. As Mr. Smart and myself were anxious to reach a sheltered spot at the head of the wady by noon, we urged on our camel. While moving on, oppressed by the heavy, sultry heat, the stillness was broken by a cry for help from our German companion in the rear, the echo of which rebounded from hill to hill as if fifty voices had cried out. Our men were sent back,

and found that in climbing a dangerous ledge the saddle had broken, and our companion was clinging with his arms round the camel's neck, afraid to let go his grip and roaring for assistance. Soon everything was righted and we pressed on. On entering Wady Tayibeh we were all impressed with its beauty and grandeur. It is over two hundred feet broad and very beautiful. The bed is quite smooth and lined with shrubs, while the lofty mountains descend perpendicularly to the road. The hills were cut into fantastic forms, resembling monster giants in their sarcophagi, massive cathedrals, temples, or human figures. The wady might well be imagined to have been a splendid boulevard of some ancient capital whose name and glory have perished from the earth.

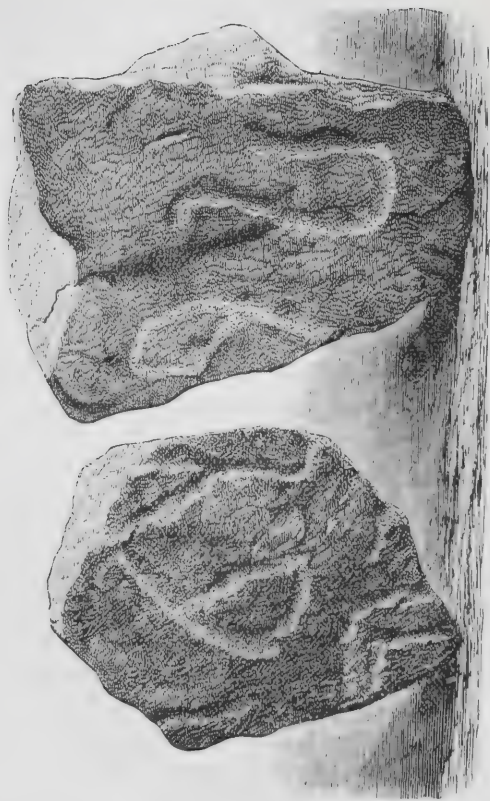
Towards sundown we came to a small spring which barely moistened the sand, in which my camel driver dug a hole with his hands. Gradually water collected in it for the camel. Meanwhile the Arab driver removed his sandals, turban and sword, and facing Mecca began his prayers. The deep gutturals of the praying Mahommedan alone broke the deep quietness. The camel soon drank the water, and lifting its head gazed steadily on its praying master for a few moments, who was absorbed in his devotions. His back was towards me. Suddenly the camel concluded the prayer was too long, or that his master ought to give him more water, for he rushed with all speed, and though I did my utmost to stop him I failed. He drove his head against the back of his master and sent him reeling on the sand. Here will be a scene now, I thought. I was prepared for a hand-to-hand fight for my life, in thus insulting a chief of the prophet. I was mistaken. He rose, and in the same tone as he prayed cursed the camel's father. When we emerged on the plain at the sea we were cheered by seeing the lights of our encampment shining in the darkness, at Ras Abu Zenimeh.

This is the traditional site of the encampment by the sea mentioned in Numbers xxxiii. The sea waves dashing on the shore kept up a continuous roaring and moaning all night. At sunrise our encampment was broken up, and a start was made. While the camels went inland we walked along the shore. The sea and sand and hills remain the same since the days of the Israelites, but no trace of the great host remains. As I went along the valley I peopled it with millions, and tried to realize the terror that must have possessed them as they entered into the heart of Arabia among the desolate mountains and wadies. It needed faith and courage then, to go into this awful desert. The tide was coming in, we were therefore forced to leap from rock to rock along the shore. One of my companions who had lagged behind, as was his wont, had to plunge into the sea at places, and scramble over the rocks as he best could, and overtook us drenched to the skin and puffing with his efforts to escape drowning. The plain extends to the Gulf of Akaba, and by some is regarded as the wilderness of Sin, in which were situated Dophkah and Alush, the two encampments before reaching Rephidim. We went along Wady Shellâl and thence to Wady Budra, which widened into a vast, circular area enclosed by the mountains. This wady is very crooked; at times there seemed no outlet, and as if we were to be hemmed in by those awful mountains of granite and porphyry, while masses of volcanic slag, resembling refuse from a foundry, were scattered along our route. The heat was like that of a furnace heated seven times more than usual, and we all were thankful when the sun sank so low as to afford us shade along one side of the wady. We passed a drove of goats herded by two boys, who were shy and refused to come near us. To-day, as in the days of Jethro, an Arab sheik's wealth consists in his sheep and goats and camels, and the difficulty of obtaining food and water is equally great now as

then. The animals have to be driven from one pasture field to another to browse on the scanty fodder and thinly scattered shrubs of the desert.

Our tent was pitched under the shadow of the lofty mountains in Wady Magharah, in which we spent considerable time. This and Wady Mukatteb are places of profound interest to all scholars and Bible students. Before us Serbal towered up like a giant among the lesser hills of the peninsula. The hills extending behind our tent were full of huge cavities, the copper mines, supposed to have been worked in the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasties, and even earlier. The name of Khufu, the builder of the great pyramid, is here, and that of Hatasu, the energetic sister of the Third Thothmes. On the walls at Der-el-Bahiri her fleet is represented returning from Arabia with copper and other articles. Sahura, a king of an early dynasty, invaded Arabia, and on a tablet he is represented with a staff in his left hand and a mace in his right smiting a prostrate enemy. He calls himself the great god who destroys the Mentu and strikes down all nations.* Greek and the supposed Nabathæan inscriptions are numerous in Magharah and the neighbourhood. Cartouches with hieroglyphs I saw, about eighty or a hundred feet above the valley, cut with great skill and well preserved. At first we were in considerable danger, caused by some Arabs who demanded water. As our supply was limited it was impossible to give them any. They threatened to plunder us of our gold as well as water. As there was an attack to be made by a superior force, I advised our dragoman to give them a portion of the water. He did so, and under its reviving power our enemies grew bolder. Outside of the tent shouting and fierce threats were uttered. We withdrew in order to let the men settle the

* Rawlinson's *Anct. Egypt*, Vol. II. p. 72.



Brought by the author from Wady Magherah, Arabia.

difficulty among themselves. The tide of war surged down towards us. Mr. Smart and myself remained in the tent; our companion gathered up his personal valuables and ran down the wady to escape slaughter. As the danger increased and the shouts grew more warlike, we followed, and left the fighting hosts to conquer or die. I carried a field glass with which I was carefully examining the inscriptions. Blood was flowing freely from the wounded; suddenly the wild shouting ceased and we were permitted to do our work in peace. Our dragoman drew the attention of the ringleader of the foe to my field glass, and informed him there was a bombshell in it which could blow into atoms a huge mass of rock standing on the top of the mountain, and to which our dragoman pointed. "How strong it is," replied the Arab foe in fear and wonder. "Yes," replied our dragoman, "by touching a handle the howadjah could bring the top of the mountain down in dust at his feet." This was enough; they thought it a most dangerous weapon, and when I turned the glass by chance in the direction in which they were standing they fled in terror and confusion, and we spent our time in peace and free from demands for bukshish. At the junction of Magharah and Wady Sidr is a lonely graveyard in the desert; the gravestones are pieces of rough granite or sandstone. At each end of the grave was a piece of stone with an Arabic inscription. There were three large graves in the shape of a horse shoe, about fourteen feet in diameter. A low, rough wall encloses this strange cemetery. At the head and foot of many of the graves were placed bundles of dried grass, the only tokens of love those poor children of the desert could bring for their dead. But that dried grass may indicate as deep love and kind remembrance as the flowers that are planted on the graves of the dead in Canada, or the costly tombs that are built often for the glory

of the living, and not the memory of the dead. How desolate and dreary that graveyard at Magharah! It emphasizes the truth that humanity is one in all the world in subjection to sorrows and death. There the dead sleep, far from the din of commerce and the struggles of men for wealth and power, until the great day.



CHAPTER XI.

THE VALLEY OF INSCRIPTIONS.

“ In a philological point of view they do possess a certain interest, but otherwise the ‘Sinaitic Inscriptions’ are as worthless as the Arab and Greek graffiti with which they are interspersed.”—*Desert of the Exodus*, p. 160.



PROFESSOR PALMER says the road through the pass Nagb Buderah, *via* Wady Shellal, was constructed at a date posterior to the Exodus, and would have brought the Israelites into contact with the Egyptian Miners.* It is uncertain, however, when the road was made; for the most part it is through natural ravines and over level areas that have been there since the formation of the Peninsula. And, as the copper mines were worked as early as the fourth dynasty and as late as the time of Thothmes III., would the Egyptians not have made a road directly to the sea to carry the ore, rather than go round by Wady Feiran? In regard to the fear of meeting the Egyptians at the mines if the Hebrews went by Magharah instead of marching along the sea coast, it is enough to remember that there were 600,000 men in the host of the Israelites, and all the miners in the desert would not have been able to hinder their march. Besides, is it not probable that these miners were slaves forced from their home, and deprived of liberty? The conquered Mentu of the desert would be forced to work

* *Desert of the Exodus*, p. 227.

in the mines also. Instead of fighting against Israel they would become their natural allies for the sake of their own freedom. There does not seem, therefore, any force in the theory that for their safety the Hebrews would have taken the southern route along the sea coast to Wady Feiran. Besides, the physical nature of the route by Magharah along Wady Mukatteb suits better the condition of things in which the Hebrews found themselves, and which led them into discontentment and rebellion. They were hemmed in by lofty sandstone and limestone ranges; their route was through a wilderness destitute of vegetation and the means of supporting life, and they were overwhelmed with despair. Thus, shut in by desolate mountains, without much food or water, and marching under a scorching sun, they feared that they had fled from bondage only to meet death in the desert, and so they murmured against Moses.

The most of one day we spent in Wady Mukatteb; at times we leaped from the camel's back on to the over-hanging ledges of rock, and then on hands and knees climbed up higher to obtain a closer view of the inscriptions, from thirty to fifty feet above the bed of the Wady. Philologists have long been trying to solve the mystery of these inscriptions. Who engraved them upon the stones; when were they engraved, and what do they record, have been asked, but not satisfactorily answered? Professor Palmer says: "the language employed is Aramæan and the character differs little from the Nabathæan alphabet used in the inscriptions of Idumæa and central Syria."* Cosmas, an Alexandrian monk, who, travelled through Arabia, A.D. 518, writes of these inscriptions, "One sees in that wilderness all the rocks written over with sculptured Hebrew characters which inscriptions certain Jews

* Desert of the Exodus, p. 160.

of our caravan having read interpreted to us." He then asserts that they were written there by the Israelities. Professor Beer, however, and Dr. Lepsius, assert they belong to the interval between the second century B.C., and the fourth century A.D. The Rev. C. Forster defends, with considerable learning and ingenuity, the theory of Cosmas, that they were written by the Israelites, and record the events that transpired during their journey. He says: "all these monuments were the work of an Egyptian people; and all the antecedents point to the Israelites of the Exode, as that people."* Suppose Mr. Forster's theory correct, what purpose would God intend these inscriptions to serve? It would be either to teach some fact not recorded in the written books of the Scripture, or to be an independent witness of the written record of the journey of the Israelites. The first supposition may be dismissed, for no new facts have been stated. As regards the second, why is there no reference in the Old Testament to these inscriptions? This would have settled the whole question. The only supposed reference is one of great uncertainty. It occurs in Numbers xi. 26. When the spirit of the Lord rested on the Seventy Elders, round about the tabernacle, two of the elders Eldad and Medad remained in the camp, and it is said of them "they were of them that were written." Dr. Margoliouth translates "they were among the cthoobeem or inscriptions." Mr. Forster says: "the identity of the Mosaic term catoobim and the Arabic name Mokatteb is not to be overlooked. There arises a strong probability that the present name may have been borne by that 'Written Valley,' from the time of Moses." These elders were enrolled as a class who were to assist Moses. Their names were written probably in a book or register, and, as they were the only two elders that remained behind, it

* Sinai Theol., p. 18.

was found that the spirit rested on them as well as on those around the tabernacle and they prophesied. In order to account for this fact it is stated they were among the enrolled ones who had been set apart for special duty. And the local Arabic name was given, because of the inscriptions without the least reference to the journey of the Israelites at all. If such a Wady existed in Canada, we would naturally call it the written valley, though we might be ignorant of the authors of the writings. The supposition that they are a supplementary evidence of the Word of God in regard to the Exodus is untenable. It has no solid basis beneath it. Why should Jehovah preserve a duplicate revelation of this part of the people's history? Or why preserve it of that age of the world? Would it not have removed strong objections and strengthened the faith of millions if there were engraved writings of the life, and miracles, the death and resurrection of Jesus; for the world's hope and salvation are in Christ, not Moses? And these inscriptions could have been easily translated and their age and genuineness determined. It would scarcely appear, therefore, that there is in the nature of things or in God's plan a reason for such an unusual method. Mr. Forster believes that the hieroglyphics and the Sinaitic inscriptions were done by the Hebrews. He makes no reference to the fact that some of these are accounts of Egyptians who worked the mines of Magharah and Sarabit-el-Khadim, but says that the miners were unfit to cut out such fine letters and delicate tracings as are seen on the summit of El-Khadim. On the other hand the Israelites who were slaves in Egypt and whose work was in mortar and in the fields would be utterly unable to do that work. In Egypt there was a subdivision of labour. Architecture and engraving on the temples or tombs were the work of a special class that stood high in social position and in the favour of the kings. It is probable

that Moses and some of the leaders of the people were able to execute such work, for he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. This fact is supported by what occurred after they entered Palestine. Moses before he died commanded the people to set up great stones after they had crossed the Jordan, and they were to write on them, all the words of the law. The command, which seems to have been given to the people, was fulfilled, as we are told in the book of Joshua: "Then Joshua built an altar unto the Lord God of Isreal in Mount Ebal; and he wrote there, upon the stones, a copy of the law of Moses which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel." *

I found the inscriptions in Wady Mukatteb most numerous on our right, as we went towards Feiran, both Mr. Smart and myself noticed that they were more abundant at the junction of the smaller wadies that extended from Mukatteb towards the sea. The inscriptions exist not only on the face of the range of hills, but on the large blocks of sandstone that have fallen and are lying in the wady. The inscriptions in Wady Aleyat and on Serbal are of the same form of character and cut out in the same manner, and probably of the same age, as those in Mukatteb. Those that were found on the granite at the base of Mount Serbal were cut deeper into the rock and the characters were formed more perfectly than those on the sandstone. Many of those in Magharah and Mukatteb were very shallow, and done with inferior pointed tools. It seems reasonable to infer that the granite inscriptions were cut earlier than those on the sandstone, and that the latter are only copies of the former. Mr. Forster, who believes that the hieroglyphics on Serabit-el-Khadim were also engraved by the Israelites, as well as the Sinaitic inscriptions, regards El-Khadim as Kib-

* Joshua viii 30-32.

roth Hattaavah, where the Israelites were buried, who perished when they lusted for the flesh of Egypt, and murmured against the Lord. He says truly that the inscriptions of a people long resident in Egypt would naturally be accompanied by hieroglyphics. But this would not afford evidence that the Israelites wrote them, and it is, I believe, an undeniable fact, that the mines were worked in Wady Magharah centuries before the Israelites passed through Arabia. The top of El-Khadim also is covered with what appears to be slag from a smelting-furnace, and large cavities are excavated in a number of places, from which ore was extracted. On this mountain is an enclosed area, at one end of which is a chamber hewn in the rock, which seems to have been the shrine or inmost sanctuary of the deity worshipped here. Blocks of sandstone that enclose this area are covered with hieroglyphics. Some of the stones have fallen and others are nearly eaten through with age and weather. The hieroglyphs are rudely engraved, which may indicate a very early date. The tablets erected in the reign of Amen-em-Hat III. on El-Khadim include a notice "of a temple built to Athor, the reputed mistress of the country, who presided over the copper mines, and was 'the lady of turquoises.'"* It is probable these are the ruins of that temple, and the passage in Ezekiel xx. 8-10 only shows that Israel in later years followed the example of their fathers, who worshipped the gods of Egypt, but does not prove that their fathers wrote the hieroglyphics. If this temple was erected long prior to the passage of the Israelites through the desert, as seems probable, the whole theory of this being the burial-places of the nobles of the Israelites is untenable. It is not denied that Moses knew how to execute such work, but there is no reason to believe the bulk of the people could do so, and it would

* Rawlinson's Ancient History of Egypt, Vol. II., p. 171.

be the policy of Moses to separate the people from the customs and religion of Egypt, and one powerful means would be not to employ the language of Egypt, for the use of it would only tend to make them think of the country, and so desire to return. Some of the letters of these inscriptions are Hebrew, others seem to be old Hebrew characters; and letters, similar in form to the Egyptian Demotic and to the Himyaritic, exist to a considerable extent, but it seems impossible, with present data, to reach a definite conclusion in regard to the age of these inscriptions. It is possible that the Israelites may have engraved the Sinaitic inscriptions. Their own language they had used doubtless during their sojourn in Egypt, they would be acquainted with the Egyptian Demotic, and contact with the tribes of the desert would give them a knowledge of that branch of the Semitic language. That the authors of these inscriptions were familiar with the Semitic language and the Egyptian Demotic is seen, I believe, in the fact that these characters are more perfectly formed than the Himyaritic, with which they were not so familiar. If this be a fact noticeable in all the Sinaitic inscriptions, it may help to determine the authors. At present, however, a translation of a bi-lingual inscription, according to Professor Beer and according to Mr. Forster, will show the vast difference between the alphabets they have adopted. No. 127 of Lepsius is Sinaitic, with a Greek line below it. The Greek reads, "Let Aus(os), the son of Ers(os), be remembered for good."* Professor Beer reads the Sinaitic the same as the Greek. Mr. Forster, however, translates the Sinaitic, "Prayeth unto God, the prophet, (upon) a hard, great stone, (his) hands sustaining Aaron and Hur." Two slabs of sandstone, which I brought with great labour, are from the south side of

* "Stones Crying Out," p. 213.

Wady Mukatteb, on one of which are two letters, which, according to Professor Beer's alphabet, are aleph and ayin, and on the other are tav and what may be mem. The letters of the one slab are cut deeply, and are well executed, while the others are quite shallow, and the marks of a pointed tool are visible. It is true some of the Hebrews had skill in working cloth and a few in working metal, but the bulk of them would neither have the ability nor the desire to commemorate their own wickedness and the divine judgments inflicted on them. If they were engraved by any of the leaders or skilled workmen, their performance has been very indifferent. These inscriptions are probably as distinct and perfect as in the time of Cosmas, and in a country in which there is scarcely any rain and in which the atmosphere is very dry, they may remain for thousands of years, but that is no evidence in support of their Israelitish origin. The Jews in Alexandria and Egypt generally, either from a desire to visit the scene of the giving of the law or for purposes of trade, would have communication with the tribes in this part of Arabia. They were familiar with the Greek language from the time of the Ptolemies, and doubtless would have some acquaintance with the language of the tribes themselves and that spoken in the south-eastern part of Arabia. Is it not possible that the inscriptions were engraved by them to commemorate their journey for trading or religious purposes? The style of workmanship in the hieroglyphics struck me at once as superior to that of the Sinaitic inscriptions, and, while the latter undoubtedly are of remote antiquity, I do not feel prepared to believe they are the work of the Hebrews executed during the time of their wandering through the desert.

As we rode from Mukatteb into Wady Feiran we were impressed with the grandeur and wild desolation of the scenery. The mountains rose up in lofty peaks of sandstone,

and further on, of diorite and porphyry, like giant pyramids. Though the heat was oppressive and the valley and mountains as barren and dreary as could well be imagined, our men were rejoicing, in their solemn style, at the prospect of soon reaching the Oasis, and as they sat smoking their pipes round the camp-fires telling tales of mighty valour and feats of horsemanship of some mythic Mahommedan hero, contentment was graven on their wizzened faces. My fame as a medicine man had spread through the camp, and often our sheik came into the tent with the utmost politeness and after many salamats had been exchanged, he would hold his head with both hands and implore the Hakim to help him. I offered him pills of various kinds that would have probably helped him, but he refused them. When I brought out my stock of medicine and asked him which he wished he always put his hand on a bottle of citrate of magnesia. With this I made a cooling drink for him, which he drank to the last drop, and placing the vessel in my hands would repeat "hamd lillâh," "thank God." With whatever disease our sheik was afflicted, a sore foot, a pain in the breast, or sore eyes, the remedy he asked was always the same, a cooling drink of citrate of magnesia. This passion for medicine is so strong among the Arab tribes that some even feigned illness in order to get it. A young man of our company, who had charge of our baggage, having heard through the sheik of the marvellous virtue of this medicine put his head inside our tent door and asked for medicine. I invited him in and inquired the nature of his trouble, he said "I am well every two days, but on the third day I feel my head loose and my body all sore." It would be difficult for a physician to diagnose the disease that afflicts a patient from such symptoms. I asked him if he prayed and he said "no." I then inquired the reason for this, "because," he replied, "I am often in a hurry and have no water to wash

my body with." But he swore by his beard saying, "if the Hakim will give me medicine I will pray regularly and faithfully." As he had a severe cold, followed by burning fever, I gave him something that would break the fever, and he retired with expressions of the utmost pleasure and promised to report himself in the morning if he felt better.

An early start was to be made to reach the Oasis of Feiran early in the day. At daybreak, however, it was found one of our baggage camels had wandered from the camp during the night. We left the encampment on foot and found him about a mile away, as if in a hurry for the water and green pasture of Feiran. He was an ugly, old fellow, and refused to allow us to go near him. We had seen his tricks at Gharandel and had a suitable dread of him. On that occasion he was rushing about wildly and roaring furiously, his driver wished him to kneel down to be unloaded. After having employed all the usual methods to make him kneel jerking him by the bridle and by the neck, at the same time uttering a guttural sound like suk, suk, suk, and exhausted his Arab patience, he went to the rear of the camel and took him by the tail to force him down. Suddenly the wicked old fellow lifted one of his long hind legs and as the joints were quickly and powerfully extended, one after the other, the foot finally struck the Arab driver and sent him reeling among the reeds, *hors de combat*. and then scampered over the wady proud of his work, followed in hot haste by the wounded and cursing Mohammedan. At noon we lunched under the shade of Hesi el-Khattatin a piece of rock about fifty-seven feet long, twelve feet high and eighteen feet broad. This, according to the tradition of the Arabs, is the rock which Moses smote and from which the water, came to quench the thirst of the Israelites. It is a piece that has fallen from the face of the hill behind which rises to the height of about two hundred feet. Down the face of this tradi-

tional rock is a groove about half an inch deep at the top and becoming deeper and wider towards the bottom. The Israelites had arrived at Rephidim and there was no water and they murmured, "Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?"* Professor Palmer says of this rock near the Oasis of Feiran: "It is a significant fact that in Wady Feiran immediately before the part of the valley where the fertility commences, I discovered a rock which Arab tradition regards as the site of the miracle."† Heaps of small stones are lying round the rock, thrown by the Arabs. They yet cast a stone on the heap in passing; this custom arose from the tradition that when the Israelites quenched their thirst there, they sat down and amused themselves by casting stones into the river that had sprung out of the rock. In this part of the wady there are no traces of water now, hot sand and barren mountains are all the thirsty and weary traveller sees. But in less than half-an-hour we turned to the left and entered on the famous Oasis of Feiran. On our right was a garden of palm trees watered by Shadufs; teyal and sidr trees were in abundance. Arab women were lifting water from the wells as we passed. The vegetation and the cool, refreshing water made us forget the fatigue of our long journey, and our heart was cheered at the sight of this earthly paradise. This fertile region is the pride of the Arabs whom we found resting under the shade of the palms, with a feeling of laudable pride, as if no other spot on earth could equal it. Soon we reached the hill El Maharrad beyond which our tent was pitched opposite Wady Aleyat. As it was three p.m. when we reached the tent the heat was intense, and we rested for a few moments before we began the work of examining this famous

* Exod. xiii. 3. † Desert of the Exodus, p. 135.

place. A small stream gently rippled past our tent door, it was only about three feet wide and a few inches deep, and the water falling over the smooth stones in its bed formed small cascades. How we delighted in that small stream with its banks lined with tarfa and other shrubs; the water was clear, cool and sweet. We had seen nothing like it in our march from the Red Sea; we all kneeled down and lapped its refreshing water with our closed hands and it seemed as if we would never be satisfied. We had learned two lessons before we reached this Oasis, the terrible sufferings that the weakly ones, and the women and children of the Israelites must have endured from scarcity of water in that awful wilderness, and also the precious blessing of water, so abundant and so little appreciated in other lands. The hill of El Maharrad extends across the wady for about one hundred and fifty feet, is about fifty feet high, and slopes gently down on the south-west side to the bed of the wady. Ruins of an ancient church, the foundations of houses, broken pieces of sandstone and marble columns cover the summit. Traces of a wall that enclosed the hill are yet visible. Along the west and south side of the hill is a narrow strip of soil, occupied with tarfa and other shrubs, watered by a narrow channel which conveys the water from a point higher up the wady. This has the appearance of a modest boulevard extending round two sides of the famous little hill, This is the spot according to Arab tradition on which Moses sat during the battle with the Amalekites, and the stone figure of a man in a sitting posture with uplifted hands discovered here by Professor Palmer would at least indicate the belief of the Christian inhabitants of Feiran. Wady Feiran is the site of Rephidim and the scene of the defeat of the Amalekites and the miracle of supplying water from the rock. When the Israelites pitched in Rephidim, it was a waterless desert, for there was no water to drink, but Moses "clave the rocks in

the wilderness, he brought streams also out of the rock, and caused the water to run down like rivers.”* “He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and there he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation.”† The present condition of Wady Feiran is suited to the words of inspiration. Its springs and streams give it fertility, and the palm, acacia and sidr trees abound, and patches of soil were green with grain when we were there, standing in striking contrast with the barren desert through which we had passed. There seems to have been a city there from time beyond history, and those caves that open on the face of the mountains may have been the abodes of the ancient Amalekites, as well as the monks of the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. And there is no reason why we should doubt that the spring that gushes out at the base of the mountain, in the wady some distance beyond Maharrad is the result of the Power of God in supplying His people with water. The miracle was not temporary, but its effect was to be enduring, “the wilderness was made a standing water.”

Some distance before reaching El Maharrad, is El-Hesueh, where there are one or two wells enclosed in a garden. Mr. Forster identifies this with Alush, the site of the encampment previous to Rephidim. He believes Moses employed the Arabic article instead of the Hebrew, and the latter part of the word he seems to derive from the Hebrew for man, “Ish Heuse Alush, or El Hesueh” signifies “a multitude of men.” Whatever may have been the route of the Israelites either up Wady Feiran from the sea or along the inland route, they must have passed El Hesueh. Here the Amalekites would see the millions of strangers forcing an entrance into their mountain-girt paradise. If the war began here it would be

* Ps. lxxviii. 16, 17.

† Ps. cvii. 35, 36.

conducted along the wady towards the Oasis, and if the Amalekites were driven back the Israelites would gradually reach Maharrad, on which Moses was seated to inspire his people as he prayed to the Lord. The miracle was wrought before the battle, and if it began near Hesueh, it is most reasonable to regard the wells there as the visible evidence of the supply of water. Rephidim may have been the name given to an area of country as well as the city of the Amalekites, and thus the Scripture account be quite true, there was no water; for there must have been water somewhere in this region to supply the wants of a people numerous enough to have given serious battle to the Israelites. The Amalekites were fighting for their homes, and their country, and although it is only a desert, the tribes will fight for now it as if it were the most fertile spot on earth. The Amalekites may not have been numerous, but, knowing the wadies and mountain passes, they would have an advantage over the Israelites who were ignorant of the place and the number of the enemy. Stanley regards Rephidim as situated in the Oasis of Wady Feiran, but if it were in the Oasis there would be no need of the miracle to supply water, for the existence of such an Oasis implies the presence of water, and the Amalekites would surely not wait to let their enemy enter the very garden of the desert before going out to oppose them. It seems therefore, there must have been water in Rephidim to sustain the inhabitants, but this was not within reach of the Israelites, or was utterly insufficient to quench the thirst of the multitude of the Hebrews, and therefore it became necessary to supply them or they must perish. From Suez to Sinai the only sweet and fresh water we met was at Feiran, and the rivulet flowing from the foot of the mountain on the right hand of the wady, on the way to Sinai, which watered the gardens and fields of grain and flowed past our camp, probably is the

permanent water supply from that miracle. The manna ceased because its supply was from a supernatural source, but may the water not have been brought to the surface from natural springs already existing, and a fissure in the rock was all that was needed to cause it to appear at that particular place? Thus the water would continue to flow so long as the springs exist, and the language of Scripture already quoted demands, if it be literally interpreted, a permanent continuance of the water. On the whole, therefore, I hold the opinion that the cool, running waters of Feiran are a standing evidence of the truth of Scripture, and one can travel over the fertile gardens and look down from the lofty mountains that hem it on every side, only with feelings of profoundest interest in every rock, in every grain of sand, and in its clear, limpid waters for they are the silent witnesses of great events and famous men in the centuries of long ago. The first day of our tenting in Feiran we ascended Jebel Tahumeh. Our ascent was made by a narrow, rude footpath trodden by the feet of the hermits in the early centuries, and perhaps made by the heathen tribes prior to the passage of the Israelites through the desert. Some of the caves in the face of the mountain were only high enough to allow a man to sit upright and long enough to allow him to lie down. A few of them had two rooms separated from each other by a thin wall, the majority however had only one cell. Chapels built of the rough stone of the mountain, stood in ruins at intervals. On the summit stood the finest of them, about twenty-five by twenty feet square. On the side facing Feiran were two niches with semi-circular arches; the area of the building was filled with sandstone columns, broken bases, and capitals. The view was extensive and grand, northward rose Jebel Benat, mantled in rich brown in the fading sunlight. At our feet lay Maharrad, hallowed by the tradition, that nearly thirty-five centuries ago Moses

sat on it with outstretched hands until Amalek was defeated. Beyond rose in silent and awful majesty five-peaked Serbal gilded in many-coloured splendours. Nations have risen and perished since the important scenes of Bible story were enacted there, but no change has passed over those everlasting hills that hem in this beautiful paradise of the desert by their mighty bulwarks of granite, diorite and sandstone.

Our descent was by another route, and full of danger, the loose stones in the narrow ravines slipping from under us and throwing us on sharp pieces of granite, that bruised and cut our hands and feet. At one part of our descent we were obliged to take hold of an overhanging rock, and let ourselves down to a narrow ledge. We then were forced to crawl on this ledge about four feet wide. The face of the mountain was almost perpendicular, for a depth of over two hundred feet, to the rocky valley below. I was forced to cling closely to the mountain, for a slip of a few inches would have hurled me over into the deep abyss two hundred feet below, full of huge blocks of fallen granite. With a few bruises, however, I passed this dangerous path safely, and, after scrambling over fallen masses of rock, reached the valley below. Mr. J. Smart had led the way, and we both awaited our companion, who when he reached this rubicon was struck with terror, and ran back from the edge of the precipice beating his hands together and crying "mein himmel." Only after much coaxing could we prevail on him to listen to us, and after considerable effort on our part did he cross the perilous bridge, and thanked God. On reaching solid ground he swore "no one would ever find him in such danger again." He was bold in speech but timid in action, and tried to carry out his vow. Climbing over masses of rock forty or fifty feet square, and sometimes crawling under them, at length our tent was reached at dark. We retired early as the arduous ascent of Serbal was to be made the following day,

but all night long our men kept up a fusilade of Arabic; for a moment there would be a lull in the confusion of tongues, then it would break out loud and furious, until in despair Mr. Smart rose, and in forcible Saxon, of which they were ignorant commanded silence, and deep silence reigned in all the camp.

The ascent of Mount Serbal is one of some difficulty, but the climber is well rewarded when he looks down from its lofty summit on desert and lesser mountains, and the distant sea. Its five peaks towering in awful grandeur into the blue sky, and its rugged grandeur make it the most prominent mountain in this part of Arabia. Various suggestions have been made as to the origin of the name; some have derived it from Ser Ba'al, "Lord Ba'al," or from "Serb Ba'al," "the palm grove of Baal." I asked my sheik its meaning; he replied, "a long, smooth garment." This seems to coincide with Professor Palmer's view who makes it signify "a shirt."* Perhaps it may refer to the smooth globular form of the summit of Madhawwa, which slopes gently down on every side. However, my sheik was ignorant of the origin of many of the names of famous places in the desert, and their statements are not always of much importance. If Baal, as the sun-god, was worshipped by the ancient tribes of the desert, there is no more suitable place than this mountain on which they could have reared altars and offered sacrifices to him. And, notwithstanding any difficulty as to the form of the word, it seems probable enough that Serbal refers to the god Baal, whose worship was so universal in pre-Israelitish times.

We rose at three o'clock in the morning to climb that mighty giant, whose peaks, at a height of more than eight thousand feet above the sea, have stood defiantly from the

* The Chaldee verb (Sarbel) signifies to cover, as with a garment; hence Sarbalir, wide pantaloons, worn by Orientals.

dawn of creation against heat and hurricanes and time. A cup of coffee and piece of coarse bread sufficed for breakfast, and our guides were ready. I found mine, a young native of Feiran, twenty years of age, strong, supple, and very obliging, dressed in a coarse abyah, with black and gray stripes. A rough belt was about his middle, to which were fastened his powder-flask and shot-pouch. On his head was a close-fitting skull-cap and a tarboosh round it, both of which had been new and clean long ago, but now were on their last legs, or last head. As we left camp the moon was shining, throwing its light into the thick darkness of the wady, and the great peaks of Serbal and Jebel Monejah were casting shadows in the Oasis of Feiran. As we rode across Wady Feiran no sound was heard in the awful stillness of that lonely spot but the slow, steady tread of our camels. We passed under the shadow of El-Maharrad on our right; on our left was a cluster of palms, and further on a garden was hedged round about, in which were patches of grain. Wady Aleyat, up which we rode, was thickly strewn with boulders, scattered in all directions. In the centre, winter torrents have washed out a deep gorge. Seyal trees were numerous in the wady, and on our left, under Jebel Monejah, palms were flourishing. The path was narrow, and extended in every direction, and at times it was in no direction at all, for it did not exist, and our camels were forced to pick their way as best they could among the large masses of rock. Sinaitic inscriptions were on both sides of us, ruins of huts with stone walls round them, and ruins of old tombs. Our camels carried us as far as possible up the wady; we then dismounted, stripped off superfluous garments, left the camels with the drivers, and began the ascent on the north-east side. For a time our route lay along the spur of one of the colossal peaks of Serbal; frequently we had to leap from one boulder to another, or were forced to climb over or

crawl under some huge mass that blocked our way. Soon we entered the yawning chasm, extending from the summit to the very base; the peaks were standing up against the sky in dim outline, and the whole mountain was magnified into vaster proportions in the early morning. The climb was hazardous and tiresome, but we were fearless, and ready to do what others had done before us. Following our guides into this deep chasm, we began to ascend. For an hour we walked over the immense blocks of granite that were lying across our path, with ease, after that the route was steep and dangerous, for at times the stones under our feet would slip, and only by a quick spring did we escape being dashed into the deep chasm below. At places, masses of granite and porphyry had been hurled from the monster shoulders of Serbal in the distant past, now they were lying across our path. To climb over them or crawl beneath them was impossible—it was a mystery how we could pass them, but soon our guides, crawling along a narrow ledge, squeezed themselves between the sides of the mountain and the end of the blocks, and we followed. Sometimes our path was almost perpendicular, and we slipped on the small, loose stones as if they were ice. At other times we pulled ourselves up to narrow ledges that extended horizontally across the deep chasm, and cautiously climbed to a safer footpath. The sun was shining powerfully on our back long before we reached the top, and, though ascending into a cooler atmosphere, the sun's heat and our efforts kept us in profuse perspiration. The higher we went the oftener we rested, and looking up after two hours' hard climbing, those frowning peaks seemed as far away as ever. On reaching the first plateau, we rested on the smooth, shelving rock, in the crevices of which we found some snow and ice, which were welcome and refreshing. To the top seemed only the work of a few moments, but we were deceived. Passing through a

natural rent in the summit of the mountain, wide enough to allow us to squeeze through, then winding round and round the dome of the mountain, like the narrow stairs round the dome of a great cathedral, we finally stood on the very top of famous Serbal. How grand the panorama that stretched out before us! Its glory surpassed our sanguine expectations. The air was cold, so buttoning our coats closely we gazed out afar over Arabia. Eastward lay the Gulf of Akaba, stretching northward towards ancient Ezion Geber. Far away to the south-east were Jebel Mûsa and Jebel Katharina. Northward was the Tih range of mountains, extending like an impassable wall; southward lay Tor by the sea, with the intervening desert of whitish sand extending inland to the very base of Serbal. To the south-west the Gulf of Suez appeared like a margin of deep green fringing the desert and the limestone hills. Thousands of feet below were Wadies Aleyat and Rimm covered with huge boulders, while here and there a palm or wild fig-tree rose above the general level. Wadies stretched in every direction, and isolated mountain ranges occupy this part of the peninsula. Dreariness and desolation reign supreme. There were no signs of fertility except in the Oasis of Feiran—no green fields, rich gardens, orchards, and comfortable homes were there, nor were there cities and towns with the busy tread of men and animals, and the buzz of machinery, such as one would have seen in an equal area in Canada. Silence reigned like that of the grave, broken only by an occasional remark of my companions. The desolation and terrible grandeur of the scene will never be effaced from my memory. Standing on that awful mountain, and looking on those wadies, I peopled them in imagination with the marching hosts of Israel. Over those brown hills the pillar of fire cast its bright light of glory by night, and the pillar of cloud its shadow by day. Though wanting in great cities and

wealth, that barren area over which I looked was the theatre of mighty events, from which the world may derive wisdom and warning. Everything filled my soul with interest, and the works of Omnipotence were all about me and below me. I opened the Word of that omnipotent God and read: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands; they shall perish; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail." *

The descent of the Serbal is no child's play, it requires nerve and dexterity. As the loose stones rolled from beneath our feet, we grasped projecting rocks or the branches of wild fig trees that here and there had sunk their roots down among the rocks for a scanty existence. In this manner we guarded ourselves against a rush headlong into the deep and terrible chasm that yawned far below us. At other places we had to slide cautiously over the surface of the rock worn smooth as glass by the rain and weather during long ages of the past. At length, exhausted and footsore, we reached our camels which were waiting for us, about a mile from the foot of the mount. One of my companions, who was somewhat corpulent, found it a terrible work to climb the mighty Serbal. Mr. Smart and myself had reached the summit half an hour before him. And as we were preparing to descend our friend put in an appearance. His face was crimson, and perspiration was flowing from every pore in his body, and with difficulty he dragged one foot after the other. I informed him we were ready to descend. He replied, "I must have a good view of this panorama." We decided to remain ten minutes longer for him. At the end of that time he said he was tired and

* Hebrews i. 10-12.

thought he would remain at least one hour. During the time he occupied in climbing the mountain he had consumed a bottle of goat's milk, another of water, and a third of wine. In doing the same work we were content with a handful of ice and snow from the crevices of the rock. We wrote our names on paper, as thousands have done before us, and put it in a strong glass bottle, which we inserted in the centre of a cairn of stones, on the top of Serbal. We added each a stone to the cairn, left our guides with our companion, and made the dangerous journey down alone.

We found our camels and men resting in the shade of one of those rude nawamis that abound in this part of the Desert. It was about six feet high, and ten or twelve in diameter, and composed of rude stones. There we spread our mat and ate in haste our lunch, for the sun was sinking low towards the west, and a good day's march was yet before us ere we reached our tent, which had been struck in the early morning. We spent two long hours, in great anxiety, waiting for our friend to descend. I frequently scanned the whole lower part of the mountain through my field glass, and at last saw him emerge from the gorge at the base. He was divested of his coat, and had his shirt sleeves rolled up to the shoulders. The three Arab guides were carrying his coat, field glass and other articles, while he trudged wearily along, dragging one foot after the other as if it were as heavy as Serbal itself. He sat down on a rock, breathless, while we hastily spread out lunch before him, cut his bread, poured out water from the goat skin and advised him to hurry after us.

We came down Wady Aleyat quickly. It was five o'clock p. m., when we reached the Oasis, and after the long fatiguing climb since three o'clock a. m., we were tired and thirsty. We lapped the cool water from the rivulet, flowing between its narrow banks of green grass, dotted with sweetest flowers. It

refreshed us for the journey before us. Under the shade of the feathery branches of the palms, a dozen Feiran Arabs were making mats, to whose sheik we bad adieu and left Feiran forever. On our left the huts of the Arabs were hid among the tarfa, reeds and palm trees. The deepest silence prevailed, there was light in a few of the houses but I heard no voice. No children were to be seen, nor merry voices heard as in the rural villages of Canada, on a quiet summer's evening, after the cares and work of school. The children of the Desert and the Fellahîn children of Egypt play as if they were old men. Nowhere does one see in those lands the healthful joy that Christian liberty and love give the children of our land.

A cripple sat by the wayside and begged—a mass of utter wretchedness, with little to comfort him at the hands of his poor friends, or of his religion. Beyond the outskirts of Feiran the tarfa became trees one and two feet in diameter, the branches of which we had to force aside as we rode through. On the right were mounds of clay, a strange object in this desert of rock and sand. Lepsius regards them as deposits made by Wadies Sheik and Selaf from the Jebel Mûsa range and by Wadies Aleyat and Rimm, the watershed from Serbal meeting in this natural basin, and in remote times having formed an inland lake.* El-Buweb stands across the wady like the pylon leading into some mighty Egyptian temple. Soon we went through this pass, leaving Wady Sheik and Wady Rimm behind, and entered the long, desolate Wady Selaf. Three hours from Feiran we passed an Arab camp, whose sheik kindly desired to lodge us for the night. My experience of passing the night in an Arab tent was not such as to make me rashly do it again, so with much ceremony

* Tour to Sinai, p. 24, 5.

we declined the sheik's invitation to eat and sleep with him. At eleven o'clock we drove into our encampment, situated at the base of a low range of hills in the form of an amphitheatre. The Arabs had a fire burning, and a light hung in our tent door, where faithful Abdullah anxiously awaited our arrival. Soon we retired to rest. A little after midnight, the sound of a camel was heard in the distance, which echoed among the silent hills. In a few minutes our companion entered the tent exhausted. After a few moments I asked, "*Etes vous fatigué, monsieur?*"—"Are you tired, sir?" "*C'est mon affaire, monsieur,*" he replied—"This is my business, sir." Having eaten some food he became more sociable and said, "we have had a terrible journey and little provision to-day." But as he had the same food as ourselves, and in addition the three bottles of liquid which he consumed on Serbal, his hardships did not move us. Besides, on his return to Feiran he had rummaged among the Arabs' tents until he had obtained a bottle of goat's milk, some dates and a few eggs of wild fowl.

There will always be deep interest in the scene of the giving of the Law, amid the terrible glory of the presence of Jehovah. Is Serbal the mount of the Law? It is uncertain, for authorities are divided in their opinion, and the Scriptures do not afford sufficient data to place the subject beyond dispute. The evidence in support of the theory that Serbal is Mount Sinai is not, in my opinion, satisfactory or conclusive. Sinaitic inscriptions abound in Wady Aleyat and on Serbal, but the origin of these is yet undecided and therefore can afford no evidence. Wady Aleyat is one vast chaos of rocks, riven and hurled from the shoulders of the great Serbal, and we read that "the whole mount quaked greatly"* when Jehovah descended on Sinai in fire. But it is not safe to infer

* Exodus xix. 18.

that the mountain with its vast chasms and the multitude of huge fallen rocks are indisputable evidence to support the belief that Serbal is the true Sinai, for there is the same appearance at Jebel Mûsa. This range of Jebel Mûsa seems to have been subjected to some terrible power that has riven it into vast chasms, down one of which I descended on the north-east side with immense toil, into Wady Dêir. Wady Leja and the wady extending along the south side of the range, and the south-east part of the Wady Dêir beyond the convent are covered with multitudes of loose blocks. In note eighteen, page one hundred and three of "Sinai Photographed," the author says "traces of the miraculous phenomena ought to be visible on the mountain" and asks, "Can facts attest more literally the awful sequel, than do the rifted precipice and the rent rocks of the Wady Aleyat?" Mr. Forster and those authors who regard Serbal as the mount of the law, place the Israelites in Aleyat and Rimm, where they could see Jehovah and hear Him. But if these wadies were then occupied by the people and these shivered masses rolled down from the mount, that are now lying in these wadies, few would have escaped to tell the story. They would have been almost entirely annihilated. The condition of Serbal and these wadies does not meet the requirements of Scripture. But in this respect the valley of Er-Raha before Sufsafel does, for the people could have remained there and in Wady Sheik and along towards Wady Leja, safely, and have seen Jehovah descending on the mount, and the awful majesty of His presence. In this respect, therefore, Er-Raha has the preference. Besides, if wadies Aleyat and Rimm were covered with those masses of fallen rock before the Israelites entered, it would have been utterly impossible for one million even to have pitched their tents in them close to the mount.

The historical references quoted by Mr. Forster, from

Eusebius, Ammonius, and Cosmas, merely indicate the opinion of these authors, for they had no sources of evidence that are wanting to us. The last author is evidently inaccurate and unreliable, he writes: "Mose swent forth to Horeb, that is to Sinai, which is about six miles distant from Pharan." To the base of the mountain from Maharrad is not more than two miles. Dr. Stewart writes, "if any one will consult the account given in the book of Exodus, of the encampment of the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai, he will find two things required to fix the locality, first a mountain sufficiently isolated and lofty to be seen from the region lying round its base, and secondly a valley large enough to contain the tents of Israel, and visible through all its extent from the mountain top."*. It seemed clear to me, viewing the whole territory from the top of Serbal, that it does not comply with these conditions—it is not isolated. The spurs of the mountains stretch far out into the wadies and plain at its base, and the plain is not distinctly separated from them, so that the people could not know as they crowded round the mountain, where the plain ended and the mountain began. The Scriptures demand as a chief condition that the mountain should be quite separate from the plain, for if the people touched the mount they would surely be put to death. Then if they stood in the wadies beyond the spurs of Serbal they would be too far away to see distinctly. Besides, if those wadies at its base were as they now exist, the people could never have pitched their tents in them, for they are almost literally covered with rock. In my opinion therefore Serbal does not comply with the conditions stated by Dr. Stewart, or required by the Scripture narrative. The names do not afford any real clue to guide to a solution of the difficulty. Horeb, according to

* The Tent and the Khan.

Lepsius, signifies "the earth made dry by draining off the water"* and that "the name was not applied solely to the mountain but also to the valley." In Exodus xix. 2, we read, "they were departed from Rephidim and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount." As Horeb is an area in which the mount is situated, this is doubtless synonymous with the desert of Sinai, and the wilderness in which Israel camped before the mount. But can that be called a desert or a wilderness, in which the one fertile oasis of the whole desert is situated? It is the paradise of the desert, not a wilderness. The condition of the territory in which Jebel Mûsa is situated is literally a wilderness and desert, barren wadies and weather-worn, dreary mountains extend on every side, and only scanty shrubs are found in a few localities on which the sheep and goats browse, as in the days of Moses. Both Exodus and Numbers show that one march brought Israel from Rephidim to the desert of Sinai, where they encamped before the mount, and Lepsius points out the people must have made the journey of thirty-eight miles in one day from Feiran to the Jebel Mûsa Range, which he seems to regard as an impossible performance. This is one of the most serious objections against the opinion that Jebel Mûsa is the true Sinai. I made two-thirds of the journey on camel in five hours from Feiran. A man walking at the rate of three miles an hour would accomplish the journey in little more than twelve hours. Sinai was the mount of God, where they were specially to worship Him. The people would be eager to reach it and would therefore make a forced march. The road is open and easy to travel as far as Nagb Hawa, and as they had refreshed themselves with the water and produce of

* Tour to Sinai, p. 83.

Rephidim, they could march further and with less fatigue than at any previous part of their journey. They walked by the guidance of the pillar of fire by night as well as by the pillar of cloud by day, and if the encampment started early in the morning they would arrive at Er-Raha before the mount late at night. The people could go through the narrow defile of Nagb Hawa, though the beasts of burden went round the longer route by Wady Sheik. Professor Palmer says that they could reach Nagb Hawa and as they were to make a long stay, they would perhaps occupy some days in pitching the camp on the plain of Er-Raha, and yet it be in accordance with the words of the Bible.*

*The Desert of the Exodus, p. 136.



CHAPTER XII.

BEFORE MOUNT SINAI.

“And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire.”—*Exodus* xix. 18.



WE took a hurried lunch in the narrow pass of Nagb Hawa. This pass is about two hours' travel, and is full of masses of rock fallen from the mountains, that rise on both sides to an immense height. There was plenty of clear, cool water here which refreshed us greatly, and our camels, so that we travelled all the more cheerfully along the crooked and rugged pathway. The baggage on the camels' backs frequently came to grief, tents and canteens were knocked off as they came in contact with a huge rock of granite, and as the granite would not yield, our baggage must, and so was hurled to the ground. Our Arabs were angry, our dragoman paid them no compliments, and meantime we trudged on foot under the scorching sun. As we emerged from the pass the camels resumed good marching order. Vegetation became more abundant, Siniatic inscriptions were seen on both sides of us, and as we reached the highest point and entered the plain of Er-Raha, Ras Sufsafeh, the Mount of God, burst on our view in majestic splendour, a fitting footstool for the everlasting Jehovah. The plain was hemmed in by a range of hills on the right and left, and extends towards the Jebel Mûsa range. It is a sandy area about two miles long and one broad, dotted with low

shrubs. I dismounted and walked over the plain, which gradually inclines towards Ras Sufsafeh, whose mighty rocky shoulders rise perpendicularly from its base on the north side, and whose height and grandeur impressed me more powerfully the nearer I approached. Here the tents of Israel would be pitched, and up Wady Ed-Deîr and Wady Sheik, and on that lofty and massive mountain the glory of Jehovah had descended when "the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace and the mount quaked greatly."

Our tent was pitched at the foot of the mountains, near the convent of St. Katharine. The monastery was built by Justinian 530 A. D., at first as a fortress to protect the monks from the attacks of the Saracens. In addition he made a present of some Egyptian and Roman slaves, whose descendants are supposed to be the Jebeliyeh, the Fellahîn of Arabia. Passing through a gate from Wady Ed-Deîr we entered an open area, then a few yards beyond, on turning to the left we passed through another gate, above which is an Arabic inscription relating to the erection of the monastery by Justinian. Until recently travellers were raised up by a rope let down from the outside and hauled in by the monks, through an opening in the wall, much in the same way as a bale of goods would be hauled up into a warehouse. Now the traveller presents his letter of admission from the Greek Patriarch in Cairo and is admitted within the old walls. The convent is sadly shorn of its former glory, for in early times two or three hundred monks existed there, now there are only thirty, who spend an idle, useless life, shutting themselves in by desert and awful mountains, from the duties of life, which God has ordained for human pleasure and progress. Formerly women, hens and cats, were rigidly excluded from the holy precincts, but the light of common sense has dawned upon even the St. Katharine Monastery; those foolish regulations are

abolished, and any woman who can endure the journey will be admitted within the convent walls. On passing through that low gateway, whose iron bolts, massive hinges and strong plates tell of danger in former days, we found ourselves in an irregular court, surrounded on all sides by buildings of every size, shape, colour and age, huddled together in wildest confusion. We ascended a rickety wooden stairway, and reached a balcony equally dilapidated, extending round the building, from which doors opened into the cells of the monks. We were shown into the reception room, twenty feet long, twelve broad and about eight high; a few small windows looked out on tumble-down buildings and many curious nooks and corners. A large table, a few rough chairs, two small book-cases fastened to the whitewashed wall constituted the furniture of the room. Rough beams stretched across the ceiling, and the floor was uneven, requiring some dexterity to walk on it safely. Travelers from many distant lands have sat in this room and on those rude benches, and there Tischendorf first saw the Sinaitic manuscript, reputed to be one of the oldest and most valuable in existence, and whose readings have been adopted in the text of the revised version of the New Testament. Here we were introduced to the Abbot and to the Archimandrite Patrikios of Jerusalem, an oily, jolly man, with a brown coat, trimmed with a fur collar, over his black gown. He carried a big staff with a pigeon carved on its handle, which staff could aid him in his travels along the rough wadies of the desert, or defend him against any obstreperous Arab. In this confused pile of buildings there are stone walls and wooden ones, and architecture of every style; a Greek church and a mosque are in the same area; a charnel house is situated in a blooming garden of pomegranate, peach and apricot trees. The same strange variety extends even to the monks themselves; some are jolly, hearty fellows, others decrepit and

helpless; some are stout and ruddy, others tall, emaciated and frail. Each monk takes one department of labour, as baking, tailoring, gardening, and the ordinary housework required. Certain fasts are prescribed by the Greek Church, on which occasions the monks are allowed to eat fish and drink a liquor made from palm dates, called *araki*. It sometimes happens, either through the weakness of the faster or the strength of the *araki*, that some of the monks are put *hors de combat*. An American wished an umbrella mended to protect him in his long journey over the desert, but the artisan was not at his post and so the broken-down covering had to do duty without the cunning skill of the monk. Mr. Smart carried up a heavy pair of boots to the shoemaker of the convent, a good natured old man, that he might put a strong sole on them. Though the tools were of the most primitive kind, the work was a marvel of skill. If not beautiful or suited for Cambridge or Albany, they were made durable and useful in our rough journeys in Arabia.

The convent was crowded with pilgrims, but we pressed for accommodation, for which of course we paid. One of the monks kindly gave up his room. It was about twelve feet square, an iron bedstead stood in one corner, in the walls were four windows, the two lower ones in the French style, the two small ones above were composed of two panes of glass each. The windows looked out on the court yard and the traditional well, at which Moses watered the flocks of Jethro. The walls were very thick, as if made to endure a siege rather than to keep out cold. Six rush-seated chairs, two small rough tables, and a few rugs on the floor completed the furniture. Our dragoman brought up some of our bedding from the tent in the wady, shake-downs were made on the floor, which together with the bed, afforded ample sleeping room. A kind monk brought us an ample supply of tepid water, and after a

refreshing bath we soon retired to rest. But the strange scenes about us and the excessive fatigue of the journey banished all sleep. Sometime after midnight the bell was rung calling the monks to their nocturnal devotions. We dressed hastily, descended from the court area into the Church of the Transfiguration. A weird and solemn feeling crept over me, as I followed the black figure of a monk gliding quietly towards the church. Behind rose the mighty Jebel Mûsa range, whose darker outline could be traced with the dim starlight. On that rugged mountain top, hoary with ages, the presence of Jehovah rested, when it smoked like a furnace, and the shivered rocks were thrown down. Now, all is still and solemn, and the world is reaping the blessing of that law of God which is holy and just and good. We occupied the stalls in the nave of the church, and could scarcely recognize each other in the dim light emitted from one or two small lamps depending from the ceiling. A few candles were burning at the altar, by the aid of whose light the monks intoned passages from the Gospels. Near us one old, feeble man continued to prostrate himself on the marble floor, and kiss the stone at intervals. We remained one hour, but as the service was not for edification to us, whatever it was to them, we returned to our cell. The steps leading to and from the church have cut into them the letters of the name of St. James—I-A-K-Ω-B-O-Σ. The panels of the door leading into the church are richly carved. In the portico is a baptismal font, of silver, with winged figures, and of exquisite workmanship. The church is in the form of a Basilica; outside it has a poor appearance, but within it contains some valuable treasures of art and antiquity. The floor is of marble; light is admitted by five Byzantine windows on each side. The capitals of the pillars that support the arches of the nave are painted green, and in bad taste. The episcopal throne has some curious paintings, one of which

is a representation of the convent in the last century. Behind the apse is the chapel of the Burning Bush, over the spot on which Jehovah appeared to Moses in the bush. Removing our shoes, we entered a room about twelve by ten feet. The walls are lined with blue porcelain from Damascus. A small window in this room receives a ray of light, it is said, only once a year from the eastern side of the wady, from the cross erected on Jebel Salib. At three o'clock in the morning we began to climb Jebel Mûsa by the steps cut out by the pilgrims in the early centuries, to facilitate their visits to the holy places. The moon and stars were shining feebly as we began the ascent. For guide there came with us a Greek monk : a long black gown, covered with blue trimmings, clad his thin skeleton body ; on his head was a long black hat, flat on the crown. He carried a staff in his hand, on his feet were long, tapering shoes, and his stockings were sadly in need of the darning needle. As he moved on the quick march before us, his whole outer man, with his long iron-gray hair flying in the wind, gave him the appearance of a being who, by accident, had come to life in the wrong century.

Our path at first was easy, but soon it required more exertion to step up the large blocks of granite. The first rest was at a small spring, at which our monk informed us Moses watered Jethro's flocks ; this, however, he did not seem to notice contradicted the tradition about the well in the convent. If he noticed it, he probably thought it was a trifle not worthy of mention. Passing the chapel of the Virgin we reached the top plateau, from which the massive peaks of Jebel Mûsa, Katharine and Sufsafeh, tower heavenward in terrible grandeur. From this plateau, on which a cypress and some poplars are growing, a splendid view of the monastery is obtained. The lowest tiers of the convent wall are composed of large stones of considerable age, while the upper tiers are composed

of round, rough boulders. Loop-holes are seen at intervals for the small cannon mounted on crazy old carriages. These cannon are a trifle too large for toys or for shooting off fire-crackers on Dominion Day, but are too small to do effective work against an invading foe. It is well, however, that the tribes about the convent are peaceable and that there is no danger of bombardment. The garden, with its peach and plum trees in richest bloom, appeared like some enchanted spot on this scene of terrible heat and desolation. As we passed the small whitewashed chapel of Elijah the pathway became very steep. We toiled up those rough stone steps, worn smooth with the weather of ages and the feet of multitudes of pilgrims. On reaching the top of Jebel Mûsa, at an elevation of 7,363 feet above the sea, the air was chilly and piercing, and a strong wind was blowing. Before reaching the chapel on the summit is a hollow in the rock, pointed out by our credulous guide as that in which Jehovah placed Moses and said, "It shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by."* The scene of the giving of the law and many other traditional sites were pointed out, for the name of the traditions about our Lord Moses and Mahommed is legion. After our guide had detailed all his legendary lore, I asked, "Do you believe all this?" He replied with a solemn shake of the head, "No, sir." And we were also strong unbelievers. The atmosphere was clear, and our view extensive. The waters of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Akaba were visible, glittering like molten silver in the clear sunlight. Beyond Akaba were range after range of barren hills extending towards the rock city of Petra. Nearer mountain ranges and isolated hills stood in striking contrast with the whitish

* Exodus xxxiii. 22.

valleys that extended in every direction. Far down at the base of the mountain are the convent, Wadies Deîr and Shuaib, and beyond is Wady Sebaiyeh sweeping round towards the south of Jebel Katharina, the highest peak of this range. The wadies were dotted with the black, goats'-haired tents of the Arabs, whom we could see resting in the shade of overhanging rocks from the powerful heat at noonday; while near at hand, or up on the spurs of the mountains, the goats were browsing on the scanty pasture. The whole scene was very grand but very desolate, and is probably not much changed from the days when Moses fed flocks there, or led the Israelites on their terrible march to Canaan. Jebel Mûsa would be hid from the most of the Israelites. The wadies to the south are covered with masses of stone, and deep gorges are cut into them, so that it seems almost impossible for the people to have encamped in that direction. If this range therefore be the Mount of God, the law must have been given on the northern peak—Ras Sufsafeh.

On descending to the cypress plateau our guide led us northward; at the base, from which the vast peak of Sufsafeh is visible, we received from our kind skeleton guide, coffee, pomegranates and water to refresh us, and then began to climb. A young Towarah Arab led the way, while the old monk waited at the base for our return. Jebel Mûsa was child's work compared with the ascent of Sufsafeh. It was a steep and hard climb. We pulled ourselves up at times by the aid of overhanging pieces of rock that frowned on us, threatening destruction, and at times we crawled along narrow ledges, or on hands and knees scaled massive boulders that have been hurled from the summit by some terrible force.

At length, fatigued and foot-sore, we reached a small area, perhaps twenty feet square. Thirty or forty feet above us

was the highest peak of Sufsafeh. The wind had freshened into a perfect gale, so buttoning my coat, putting my hat close down on my head, I made ready to ascend this dangerous dome of Sufsafeh. It has the appearance of a huge globe, and overlooks the plain of Er-Raha. The surface was smooth, there was no pathway of any kind except a few broken places in the hard weather-polished rock, into which I could thrust my toes, while I crushed my fingers into similar holes on the round dome above. The face of the mountain is almost perpendicular to the plain, and terrible gaping chasms have been formed by some tremendous force, from the top of Sufsafeh to its base, for a distance of more than fifteen hundred feet. My Arab guide refused to go farther, and told many lies and called on God and the prophet to help him. He was in the utmost fear of the short journey to the top. Removing my boots and stockings I ascended about half the distance, when on looking down into the deep chasms and into the distant plain, I was almost overwhelmed with danger, and as the glory of doing what only few have ever done was not to be placed in the balance with my life, I crawled down backwards from this dangerous eminence to the platform of rock below. There I stretched myself on my face and looked out over the plain on which the millions of Israel were encamped so long before the Mount of the Lord. This mount and plain suit the requirements of Scripture. The plain is capable of holding a vast host of people; it rises gradually from the base of the mountain for a distance of nearly two miles, while the people could pitch their tents in the wadies, east and west and southwards on both sides of this mountain, and see the top of it. There is also a sharp distinction between the mountain and the plain of Er-Raha, so that the people might know where the one ended and the other began. This is a very important condition which is satisfied by Sufsafeh, for the people were warned

“whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death.”* And they were warned not to touch the border of it, that is literally the end of it. The word translated border is derived from a root signifying “to cut off,” and seems to imply that the mountain was one whose end or border had the appearance of being cut off. Now this is applicable to Ras Sufsafeh, for it rises almost perpendicularly from the plain, as if it had been cut off by some mighty power. In Deuteronomy Moses says to the Israelites, “Ye came near and stood under the mountain,”† and this language implies that the people were gathered about the base of the mountain, so that it seemed to stand over them. Now let anyone stand close to the base of Sufsafeh, and yet not touch the mountain, and looking upwards, he will find the summit seems to stand over him and he is under the mountain. On the whole there are many powerful reasons for giving Sufsafeh the honour of the Mount of God, and Er-Raha as the camping ground of Israel before the mount. Lepsius remarks there was nothing to lead Moses or any shepherd to the Jebel Mûsa range. On the other hand I saw large flocks of sheep and goats feeding in Wady Sheik, Wady Leja, and along the slopes of Jebel Katharina. The food supply of manna was the same at Sufsafeh as at Serbal, and the convent well of deep cool water, as well as the springs in Wady Leja show that water is abundant and probably was more so then. Prefessor Palmer says the neighbourhood of Jebel Mûsa is the best watered in the whole peninsula, running streams being found in no less than four of the adjacent valleys, and the people would have ample supply for themselves and cattle, and surely enough in which to cast the ashes of the golden calf. On reaching the plain from Sufsafeh, with our boots cut to pieces and our hands bleeding, our

* Exodus xix. 12.

† Deuteronomy iv. 11.

garrulous monk, with sublime indifference to all sacred history, chronology and topography, pointed out a narrow opening in the sandy plain, and said, "In there Korah, Dathan and Abiram were swallowed up." Near the entrance to Wady Ed-Deîr is a rough cavity scooped out of the rock, which he informed us was the mould in which the golden calf was cast by Aaron. If the idol were like this mould it must have been necessary to have placarded it with the words, "this is a calf." We examined many of the manuscripts of the monastery; they are contained in boxes, and guarded with great vigilance, especially since Tischendorf's time, and unless rescued soon will be destroyed. In the lower room of the library were manuscripts in various languages, and old volumes were arranged on the shelves, and among them the maggots were playing havoc. One old volume shown us was eaten through from the first to the last page. The Book of the Gospels, on parchment, and well executed, and a copy of the Sinaitic manuscript were lying on the table, but it was evident from the tone of the abbot that the sale of the original was a mistake or a misfortune on their part. Perhaps he thought a larger price should have been demanded, and their coffers would have been better replenished. It has done service to the world, however, and it would be well if they, like it, went forth to do good in the active duties of Christian life, to help the sinful and suffering ones to Christ.

On the north side of the monastery, near the entrance to the garden, are the vaults where lie the bones of bishops and monks exposed to view. Our visit to this abode of the dead was brief. We entered a small enclosed area in which were four graves huddled close to each other. On one side of this area is a low door, through which we passed on hands and knees into a vaulted chamber, where the skulls of dead monks were piled up like cannon balls, and their legs and

arms, covered with the dust of many years, were stacked up like cordwood. From this chamber a door on the right leads into another, in which the bones of abbots, bishops and others were stowed away in boxes. Some of the boxes are quite plain, others are rudely ornamented in crimson, blue and white. The guide opened a number of these, and taking out some skulls, told us, with the utmost *sang froid*, the name and character of the owners of these ghastly relics. At the door of this room sits the skeleton of St. Stephanos, clothed in robes somewhat gay for the dead. On his skull was a violet coloured cap. As the skull was leaning to one side the cap also inclined in the same direction, and gave the saint a rather waggish appearance. It is a suitable place for millionaires and monks to solemnly meditate on the vanity of all earthly things, and on the folly of living to the flesh.

It has been a pet theory with those who deny the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, that the Israelites were fed with the modern manna of the desert, which is chiefly found in Wadies Ghurandel, Feiran and Sheik. In these wadies the tarfa—the *tamarix gallica*—is found in considerable quantities. The substance that exudes from the tarfa is produced by the puncture of a small insect. The statements in Exodus regarding the manna are, it was “as coriander seed, as hoar frost on the ground.” If it was kept from one morning to another it bred worms, and when the sun waxed hot it melted. It was ground in mills and baked into cakes in pans. Lepsius says, “the manna is found only in the well-watered valleys of the primitive mountains, and now almost exclusively in Wady Feiran and the adjoining part of Wady Es-Sheik. It is renewed fresh every morning, but melts in the heat of the sun at noon; as we read in Exodus xvi. 21, ‘and when the sun waxed hot it melted.’ On looking further I found several white and yellow drops in rich strings, and on many of them

the little worms mentioned in Exodus. This is the old manna of the Israelites which the Arabs to this day call 'men.' '* The quantity now found would be utterly inadequate to supply the wants of the vast multitude, and it is probable the present local areas occupied by the tarfa, have been permanent, and if so, the camp of Israel would have had to extend over a vast area of several days' march to gather the manna. But the people were never scattered about at such vast distances, and they gathered the manna about their tents every morning. There are difficulties in the way of the theory of a natural supply of food during the wanderings of the Israelites, that like a rock dash it in pieces. The tarfa manna is of the consistency of honey, and could not be ground in mills nor baked in pans. The modern Arabs use it with bread as we use butter or honey, but not as an article of food. It is medicinal in its effect, and the people could not have lived on it for thirty-eight or forty years. What the Israelites gathered became corrupt in one day, the tarfa manna may be kept for years. It is found only in well-watered wadies, and it would be found only in similar localities or conditions in the times of the Israelites. But the people were not always travelling through oases, and favourable localities for the tarfa; they went through barren and desolate wastes, destitute of water and of the slightest vegetation. But every day, year after year, wherever they were, they gathered the manna that fell round about their tents. Besides, it is an important fact against the theory which would exclude the miraculous power of God in supplying the manna, that the tarfa manna can only be gathered during about three months of the year, and even if many of the wadies abounded with it the daily supply would have been insufficient, and during the remaining nine

* Tour to Sinai, pp. 67, 68.

months the host of Israel would have starved. The language of Scripture, therefore, and the logic of facts that overturn the theory of men must lead us to accept the truth, that by divine power Jehovah gave the people food in the desert. Sometimes by intensifying natural laws He did His will, as when the wind brought quails from the sea and let them fall by the camp, or when He sent a strong east wind that helped to divide the sea and make a dry pathway for the Israelites. Or He may exclude natural laws and physical agents, and the direct cause becomes His absolute and holy will. In the one class of cases the agents are visible and known, in the other the causes are unknown; but we can go from the visible effect to the will and power of God, which are infinite, and therefore adequate. As the Creator of matter and the laws that govern matter, as the Creator of all things visible and invisible, God surely has power to deliver His people, and to do His will without deranging the order of nature. If he at times in history has interposed His will in the general order of nature, it is, so far as we can see, to make that order subservient to a higher law, the will of God and the good of men. But was this miraculous supply a violation of this law of order? The manna was given from heaven, but the tarfa bushes grew all the same, and blossomed and dropped their sweet substance as before. By this miracle, as well as by all miracles, we learn the lesson that all laws are intended to teach, that God is Lord of all the universe, and that He will make all things work together for good to them who love Him.

We were ready to leave Sinai at four o'clock in the morning, but we soon saw an early start was impossible. A number of Arabs with their sheiks sat down on the sand and held a very excited meeting. What was the cause of trouble we had not then learned; every man spoke at once, giving his opinion with volubility and earnestness. It was a mixture of

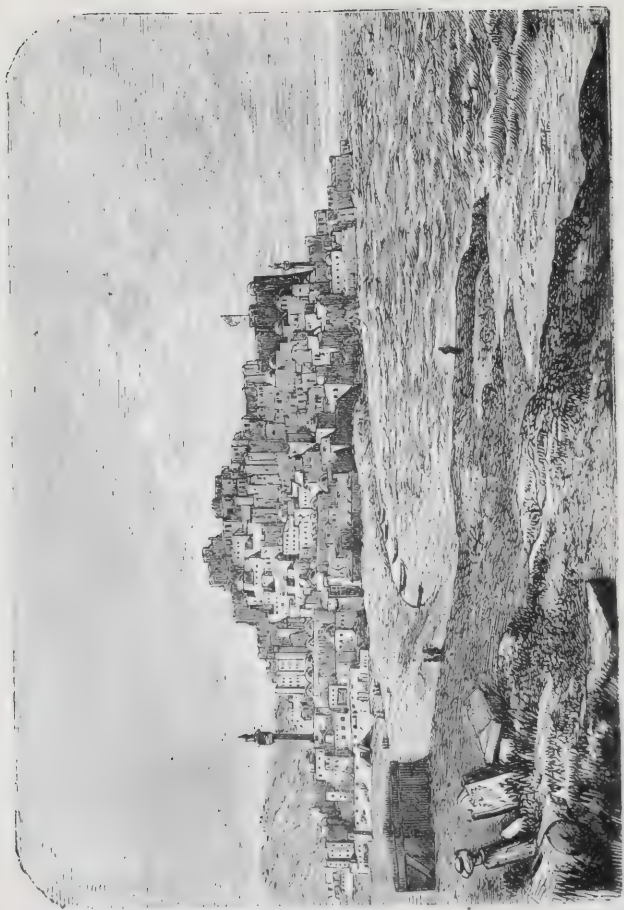
Arabic, Italian and modern Greek which was spoken. About seventy camels were lying near us, our tents had been taken down and our baggage was lying in confusion on the sand and under the shadow of Mount Sinai. The noise grew loud and louder as the Arabs all spoke together, pointing their long, black fingers into each other's faces. The cause of the trouble was that the sheiks wished our dragoman to take more camels for the baggage, but as that would incur extra expenditure on his part, he objected, or said he would yield if we would pay the extra shekels, which proposal we naturally declined. A monk from the monastery came, but he only added fuel to the fire; finally a noble looking sheik appeared, of great dignity, clothed in a handsome gown and with a spotless turban on his head. The two circles that composed the council hushed in a moment, all the men rose and bowed themselves to the earth, and going forward kissed his hand saying "Salamat." Our dragoman had to yield, and as the gold touched the hard, wizzened palms of the Arab men, joy filled their soul and beamed in their eye. Among our baggage lying on the sand was a large cage containing a number of fowls, that were to serve us for food during our march. During the excitement between our dragoman and the sheiks some shrewd Arab opened the door of the hen-coop, and soon the feathered occupants were rejoicing in liberty, even if it were in the desert, where starvation or death was the only destiny before them. A loud cackling of hens drew my attention from the angry discussions of the fierce and gold-greedy Arabs, and on turning, I saw three or four wizzen-faced fellows in full pursuit after the hens, which fled in as great terror as if they had been pursued by a pack of wolves. The prospect of a good meal supplanted the limbs of the Arab hen thieves, and soon one after another fell a victim to the steady hand and heavy blow of their pursuers. Some were killed outright,

while others whose wings had been clipped were easily caught and carried off to the tents pitched in the wadies near at hand. We enjoyed the fun of seeing now and then an Arab sprawl on his face, on the sharp rocks, as he eagerly made a bold dash for the hens. But though they escaped he would rise, and with perseverance worthy of a juster cause, continue the pursuit until his bony fingers clutched some unfortunate hen. We thought these hens belonged to the convent, and never dreamed the Arabs had given liberty to our fowls for the purpose of stealing them. But so it was, for we found to our loss that, though they regarded it as an immoral act to put their hands into the cage and take one, by a strange crookedness of their moral sense they did not regard it as wrong to let them out, and when they trod the desert they became the property of any man who could catch them. For the loss of our hens, we were rewarded by a few minutes' hearty amusement, and though our fare was somewhat diminished thereby, we congratulated ourselves on the fact that they were tough and scraggy, and contented ourselves with the knowledge that only those Arabs who were blessed with good teeth and powerful, digestive organs could enjoy the infidels' fowls. When Abdullah, our cook, discovered the loss, he threatened to murder all the Arabs in the country, and declared he would inform the British consul, if we did not, and have the British Government avenge our loss. The monk at length said "finito," the Arabs "khalas"—it is ended—and at nine o'clock the monks and Arabs bade us adieu and uttered "Salamat" with great solemnity and apparent earnestness, and withdrew, the one to the convent, the other to their flocks and goat-haired tents that were pitched under the shadow of Sinai, and we turned our back on that terrible mountain. As we passed along Wady Sheik, I stopped, read Exodus iii., lifted my cap and left the Mount of God perhaps for ever.

Among other provisions supplied at the convent were some bags of loaves. They were round like a ball, about the size of an apple, and made of the coarsest grain. In a few days they became as hard as granite. As this was our only bread supply, the prospect was anything but cheering. On halting at night, the table was usually set inside the tent and Abdullah brought in a dish of many ingredients, whose name I never learned. In this mixture Egyptian garlic played a prominent part, and as the flavour was anything but enticing, it needed inducements of hunger to make one relish it. Besides, as Abdullah had only one eye, I never felt sure that he did not put into the vessel what he ought to have left out. Along with this famous dish we were supplied with the hard loaves baked by the monks. The first evening they were brought in I asked Abdullah, "What are these?" Aysh, Howadjah—"bread, sir." La Abdullah, Deh Hagar,—“No,” Abdullah, “this is a stone.” He would then carry the small loaves out, plunge them into hot water for a few moments and return with them, when we completed our evening meal. He was a faithful man, proud of his British citizenship, and was anxious that I should bring him to Canada. That was impossible, and at the close of our long journey, we parted from him and our sheik with deep regret, for on the whole they were faithful men, the one doing his best to make bad bread good, and putting into play all his knowledge of his culinary science to make the food suit our taste, and the other doing his utmost to control a band of greedy and fierce Arabs, who were aroused against all infidels, by their strong faith that Arabi Pasha was about to drive out the British and all foreigners from Egypt.



PART II.



JAFFA.

SOUTHERN PALESTINE AND THE SEA COAST.

CHAPTER XIII.

JAFFA TO JERUSALEM.

“The Holy Land is not in size or physical characteristics proportioned to its moral and historical position as the theatre of the most momentous events in the world’s history.”—*Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible*.



THE ancient inhabitants of the country were the descendants of Canaan, the grandson of Noah. These tribes occupied the sea coast, and some of the inland rich plains towards the Jordan valley, and dwelt in the mountains. The Canaanites are said to have dwelt by the sea, and are the ancestors of the Phœnicians who probably gave the alphabet and the elements of a written language to the Hebrews and the Egyptians, and whose trading ships ploughed the great seas before Rome was founded, and sent out colonies along the shores of the Mediterranean, some of whom long and fiercely contended with Rome for the supremacy of the world. The original name of Phœnicia was Kenaan, signifying “the low land,” and from the earliest time the country on the west of the Jordan was called the land of Canaan, and local traces of the people seem to exist in such names as Cana of Galilee and others. The Philistines occupied the sea coast on the southwest. Their name signifies “wanderers,” or “emigrants,” and

must have emigrated from some other country. Amos calls them "Philistines from Caphtor."* Whether this be Cyprus or Crete, the fact would seem to be inferred naturally that the Philistines had emigrated from their native territory to an island or some place by the sea, and finally settled in the plains on the south-west of Palestine. When the Israelites came into the land they found the Philistines had formed a powerful confederacy of five cities, and they continued to have an independent existence though greatly shorn of their power. At one time some of the cities were subdued by Assyria or Egypt, and at another time by the kings of Judah, and they remained hostile to the Israelites, until finally the whole country came under the sway of the Roman empire.

When Abraham came into Canaan from "Ur of the Chaldees" the country was in the possession of these and other tribes, whose language Abraham seems to have understood, which would indicate that they spoke the language of Mesopotamia, from which Abraham came, and that the length of time intervening between their migration and his was not sufficient to modify the structure of their language to any great extent. Under David and Solomon Palestine touched its farthest limit of influence and wealth. The territory embraced under their government extended from Ezion-Geber on the gulf of Akaba to the "entering in of Hamath," and from "the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates," and in riches and wisdom and power Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth. But on the succession of his son the kingdom was divided, and the long and bitter struggles that ensued, together with the poverty and ruin caused by Egyptian and Assyrian invasions weakened the power, and dimmed the glory of the once mighty kingdom of Israel.

* Amos ix. 7.

Palestine may be called a country of hills, rich plains, and swift streams. A range of limestone, with numerous gaps, forms a central ridge extending from the Lebanon to the south of Palestine, and separates the plains on the coast of the great sea from the Jordan valley. There are two strata of limestone visible, the upper of which is hard and of a reddish brown colour. This abounds near Jerusalem, in fact the upper part of Mount Zion is composed of it, and is seen along the valley of Hinnom down to the pool of Siloam. And the rocks of Judæa between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea are contorted into the most fantastic shapes, the result of volcanic action. Syria and Palestine show traces of volcanic disturbance in many parts. The gorge through which the Jordan flows, has been formed by such a force separating the limestone strata. The trap-rock is occasionally met overlying the limestone, and the lava and extinct crater, far up on the shoulders of Hermon near the village of Migdol Esh Shemsh, are sure witnesses of once active volcanic forces, that gave the country its general outline as now seen. The plains of Palestine are exceedingly fertile, and produce abundant crops of wheat even with the rude tools and ignorant methods of agriculture at present employed. The plain of Sharon extending north and south for many miles, and inland to the Judæan hills, is a sandy loam, interspersed with areas of black soil, and is capable of supporting a dense population: the same is true of the plains of Esdraelon, Gennesaret and others. The ploughs used in every part of Palestine are of the most primitive kind. The plough-share is of wood, about eight inches broad and pointed; a stout piece of wood is attached to the share, and to it a long pole is fastened, to which the oxen are yoked. Only one handle is attached to the plough, which the husbandman holds with his left hand, while he carries a long iron-pointed goad in his right, with which he pierces the hide

of the lazy oxen. It is usually from eight to ten feet long and of the toughest wood to be found. It is useless for the oxen to kick, for they are at too great a distance from the plough and ploughman to do any harm, hence the proverb arose "it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks"—the goads—to denote the folly of fighting against an independent power. As much of the land is stony, an iron sheath is often placed over the plough-share. The soil is not turned over, and the work done in the fields is of the poorest kind: the husbandman is ignorant of the science of agriculture, he is often lazy, and his highest ambition is to keep himself and family above starving point; and it is only because the soil is so fertile that it produces any crop. I found these farmers of Palestine capable of making good bargains. Passing over Olivet to Bethany I met one ploughing the face of the mountain, above the garden of Gethsemane, and near the tombs of the prophets. He had a yoke of oxen fastened to a most primitive-looking plough. I asked if he would sell it. He replied he would if he got his price. He had never heard of a man buying such an article before, and asked if I was joking. I informed him I meant to buy the plough. How much do you ask for it? He said "I will give it to you for eighty francs." But I said that is too dear, you want more than for a new one. "Yes, that is true," he responded, "but when the infidel goes to his own country he will show it to his people and make much money." He had evidently got an American idea into his head of making the most of his speculation. By patience a bargain was finally struck. I obtained the plough with the soil of the Mount of Olives on its share, and Alexander carried it across the Kedron and through St. Stephen's gate to the Locanda, where I had it taken apart for shipment to Canada.

Along the base of the hills are low shrubs and scanty grass that afford ample pasture to large flocks of sheep and

goats. In the plains and up the brow of the hills, vines and fig trees grow in abundance, and are walled in and carefully watched as in the remotest times. The olive tree is cultivated in great quantities, affording oil for light and an article of food for the common people. The oak and the tamarisk are found on many of the hills and in the neighbourhood of Mount Tabor, the oak trees especially have grown to a considerable size. The orange, almond, and lemon trees grow to perfection in the warm rich plains of Southern Palestine. The streams are lined with oleanders and for miles appear like one mass of blooming flowers, and in spring the valleys and hill-sides are clothed with flowers of richest hue. Under good government and improved methods of agriculture, this land could be as it was of old, a land flowing with milk and honey. It can give rich pasture to numberless cattle, and to this day the rocks abound with wild honey. This small country has been the battle field of the greatest nations of earth,—Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, British and French have fought and died in this famous land. Statesmen may learn wisdom from the ancient rulers of this land, warriors that martial fame is vanity, and historians and moralists can draw lessons from it for the world's good. But the heart of the world is not drawn to it for such purposes, but because there the Word was made flesh, and the Son of God has brought life and immortality to light.

Joppa, modern Yâfa, is situated on a rising bluff on the shore of the Mediterranean, the white limestone houses, flat-roofed, are built on terraces, rising up above each other from the sea shore. The modern town extends some distance back from the shore on the level ground. It is of great antiquity, its origin is lost in the dense mists of distant centuries. Josephus says it was a Phœnician town. The name signifies "beauty," which it well deserves, as one looks on it from a

distance. The situation is beautiful. The appearance of the houses from the sea, reflecting the sunlight from their white roofs and walls, over which are seen hanging masses of gorgeous flowers, gives one the impression that it is a city where the strife of passion and evils of moral iniquity are scarcely felt. But this is quickly dispelled when one walks its streets and mingles with its crowds in the market-place. Like many other cities, its beauty of situation, of sky and flower is God's, but it is cursed with human sin. North and south the fine sand glitters in the sunlight. On one side is the Mediterranean whose waters have been ploughed by the ships of the great maritime nations of antiquity and modern times. Behind the city are extensive orange and lemon gardens, whose fragrance perfumes the atmosphere when the trees are laden with blossoms.

Joppa is connected with heathen mythology and Biblical history from remote times. The servants of Hiram, king of Tyre, brought cedar beams to Joppa, and Solomon transported them thence to Jerusalem for the erection of the glorious temple on Mount Moriah for Jehovah. Material for the second temple was also brought to Joppa. Here Jonah took ship to go from the presence of the Lord. Here, too, Peter received the vision of the sheet let down from heaven full of four-footed beasts and creeping things, which taught him that the Gentile races were not unclean, and that the Gospel was for them and for the world. It has been in ruins and rebuilt many times; it has been besieged by Saracens and Crusaders; finally it came into the possession of the Turks, and here in 1796 Napoleon I., to the everlasting disgrace of his name, on the tenth of March shot about four thousand defenceless soldiers, who had given up their arms and confided in the mercy of the Emperor of a great nation. The town contains a population of about 8,000 of various races, who trade with

Egypt, Syria, and Turkey, the export being chiefly wheat, oranges and a small quantity of silk. The streets are narrow and winding, and, as usual, full of rubbish.

The day on which I landed at Joppa the sea was as smooth as glass, and the Turkish Government had removed the quarantine restrictions twenty-four hours previous. I was thankful for both these favourable circumstances, for a rough sea at Joppa makes landing a somewhat perilous undertaking among the rocks, whose sharp peaks threaten destruction to any small boat that may be dashed upon them. And as time was as precious as gold, I blessed the Turks for their act of common sense in removing the restrictions when there was no danger of infection of cholera from pilgrims coming from the Red Sea. In a few moments Syrian porters were on board, ready to take the traveller, baggage and all, on his shoulder. The deck was crowded with Russian and Greek pilgrims. Confusion reigned supreme for a time; sturdy Russian pilgrims were hurrying in every direction with boxes large enough to contain six months' provisions, others were labouring under immense burdens stuffed in sacks, and the perspiration was flowing in profusion from their face which they wiped occasionally with their coat sleeve. The women were carrying children in their arms or leading them by the hand, while boys were rushing about with iron or brass kettles whose sooty bottoms I avoided as much as possible. Some were not equally successful, for the shape of the kettles was seen on the tail of some light-coloured coats, which roused the wrath of the wearer and earned a few cuffs of the ear for the kettle carriers. I reached the little boat at the foot of the steamer's ladder, and had a good view of the scene on the deck of the steamer. A small man was rushing back and forwards followed by his tormentors, the porters, who were each striving for his baggage and himself. Driven to despair

like a deer hunted down by the hounds, he at last mounted the side of the ship, and holding fast by both hands, he let himself down as far as possible, then swinging outwards from the ship, he tumbled upon the backs of Syrians and Russians, and landed among the boxes and bundles in the bottom of the boat. In a few moments the boat reached the shore, near the customs-house. I walked up the narrow streets of Joppa, and my feet touched the land so famous for its early and extensive influence on the civilized world.

An old building near the sea is shown as the site of Simon the tanner's house. More important sites have been lost forever, and there was no special reason why this one should have escaped the fate of oblivion, and as the town has frequently been destroyed, there can be no doubt this site is one of mere conjecture. The house is near the sea, and in this respect complies with the Scripture history. The guide showed us into a court with an arched roof; passing through a door we entered a room twenty feet long by fifteen broad, in which is an arched window on two sides of the room, and a small square window above the arched one. On one side a deep niche is cut into the stone walls, which are quite rough and plastered. By ascending seventeen steps, we reached the flat roof. In crevices a number of wild flowers were blooming and spreading themselves over the whole outside walls. From the roof an extensive view is obtained along the coast, and over the sea. I walked along the beach for some distance outside of the city. There some of the citizens were enjoying a bath after the heat of the day, and some fishermen were hauling their small boats on the shore, after the labours of the day. Along the shore I counted four tanners' houses, in the yards of which a number of partially prepared hides were hanging on the ropes, fastened to upright poles. And somewhere within range of our vision doubtless had

been situated Simon's house on which God taught Peter that the Gospel of Christ was not to be confined by Judæan hills or its streams of life stoned up by Jewish bigotry. Early in the morning we packed our baggage and were ready to start for Jerusalem in a machine called a carriage. A start was to have been made at six o'clock; but at that hour, the man who had fallen among the boxes over the ship's side was not ready. At seven o'clock our baggage was packed and a start was made. Tossing about on the choppy waves of the Mediterranean had made us sea-sick, but riding in this machine over the causey streets of Joppa and the deep ruts across the plain of Sharon was a worse torture. The wheels were not circular, or if they were, the hub was not in the centre of the wheel, or the hole for the axle was not in the centre of the hub, for the machine rose and fell with every revolution of the wheels somewhat like a sleigh plunging into deep holes and then rising, on Canadian roads, after they have been drifted by a snow storm. This state of affairs was aggravated by the hard seats slipping suddenly from under us when an extra plunge had been made into a deep rut, and we found ourselves huddled together in the bottom of the carriage. On the whole, the action of the machine was not unlike that of a Scotchman who has been celebrating New Year's day freely, or a Canadian who has been worshipping Bacchus too devotedly, and who attempts to walk over a rough country with a dizzy head and unsteady legs. The sky was clear and the air fresh as we rode on that early morning through the extensive orange orchards on the east of the city. The soil of the plain of Sharon and the climate along the sea coast are favourable to the growth of the orange tree. And the oranges of Joppa excel in size and flavour any others which I tasted grown in Palestine. Men and boys were going out to work in the fields. Some

were driving donkeys laden with baskets of oranges for the bazaars or for export to the cities along the coast, while others were gambling on the side of the road.

To a traveller from Canada the absence of apple trees in the gardens in Joppa and indeed through almost all Palestine is quite noticeable. Though I made frequent enquiries I could find no one who had tasted apples grown in the country. The only place where I saw them was in the Anti-Lebanon range near Beirût, but I was told they grew in Wady Urtas near Bethlehem. The best fruit was obtained from foreign grafts, but in a few years the fruit degenerates and becomes hard and tasteless. Dr. Thomson says that they grow in abundance near Askelon, and of good quality. The climate of the country is unsuited for this tree, except in the highlands of Northern Palestine. The heat is too intense and continues too long in summer without rain for this tree to produce good fruit, and it is probable the climate has never been suitable for it. The apple tree is mentioned in Scripture frequently: "as the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste."* The writer of Proverbs, when commending words spoken kindly and in good judgment, says, "a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."† The name Tappûach, from a word signifying "to breathe," or "be fragrant," does not determine the tree referred to. Dr. Kitto is of opinion that the citron tree is meant. Dr. Tristram and others, however, conclude that the apricot is the tree. The passages above quoted help to determine the tree and the fruit—1. It is a tree capable of affording a delightful shade from the heat; 2. Its fruit is sweet; 3. The colour of the fruit is like gold. The citron tree, Dr. Kitto says, grows to a large

* Song of Sol. ii. 3. † Prov. xxv. 11.

size and affords a pleasant shade, but Dr. Thomson, who spent years in the country says, "it can scarcely be called a tree at all, it is too small and straggling to make a shade."* In regard to the fruit, only the rind can be eaten as sweetmeat, for the pulp is acid, but the fruit of the tappûach is sweet to the taste. The shade given by the apricot trees is very scanty except where they grow in very fertile soil, like the plain of Damascus, besides, the fruit is never of a golden colour. In Joppa and other places, the orange trees were laden with golden fruit, and the branches were supported with wooden props, small chairs were placed under the leafy boughs, and at noon the owners were to be seen sitting or lying asleep under the friendly shade of the trees, watered by the small channels that extended in every direction. When we translate tappûach "oranges," the meaning of the other passage quoted from Proverbs is understood. "A word fitly spoken"—literally "spoken on wheels:" that is as smoothly as a wheel revolves, "is like oranges of gold in figured work of silver." The blossom of the orange tree is white like molten silver, and often continues on the tree at the same time as the ripe fruit is hanging from the branches. It is certainly beautiful to see the golden fruit and the rich blossoms on the trees in an oriental garden, and is an appropriate figure to express the excellence of words spoken with wisdom and gentleness.

Our route lay across the Valley of Sharon; the fields were green with grain waving gently under the morning balmy breeze, and the road was decked with flowers of every hue. Many places of note in Bible story and British history were passed until we reach Ramleh early in the forenoon. It has a population of about 3,000, the houses are substantial and well built. It is surrounded by olive gardens and vineyards, and

*Land and Book, p. 545.

has every appearance of prosperity for an Eastern town. Before we had time to alight we were surrounded by a dozen wretched lepers, some without fingers, or nose, or toes, others only able to crawl along in the dust, each one begging piteously with a tin flagon fastened to his neck. I did not find them so importunate as some writers have stated, and one cannot but feel deeply for human beings so terribly afflicted, and hatred for a government that makes scarcely any provision for the relief of such unfortunate outcasts.

Beyond a graveyard is a quadrangular area, the walls of which on the north and east are standing. It is probably the site of a Christian church, which may have been destroyed by the Mahommedans, who erected a mosque on the site. The area is overgrown with grass, and beneath the surface are numerous large excavations with arched roofs which are cemented, and may originally have been cisterns, and at a later date I think may have been used as burial places, or vaults in connection with the church and monastery. At one corner stands a tower that has defied the shocks of earthquake and the ravage of Crusader and Saracen; it is about one hundred feet high, twenty-eight feet square at the base. We ascended by one hundred and twenty-six steps to the top, from which there is a fine view for many miles. This is the traditional site of Arimathea, the city of Joseph, in whose new tomb our Lord was buried. Dr. Thomson is of opinion that it is the site of an old city which was only partly rebuilt by the Mahommedans, and that the tower is older than 1310 A.D., the date inscribed above the door.

A road to the left leads to Lydda at a distance of nearly two miles. The road, which is narrow, extends between high hedges of cactus in bloom. The soil is sandy, but well suited for the olives and vines which abound there. Lydda contains a population of about two thousand, and is situated in a fertile plain,

surrounded by olive, pomegranate, fig and charob trees. The people are industrious and cultivate the fields and gardens as well as any people in Palestine. Here St. Peter healed Æneas, who had paralysis for eight years, and here he was residing when the saints of Joppa sent for him to raise Dorcas from the dead. Like many other towns situated on the road of travel between Egypt and Damascus, and between Joppa and Jerusalem, it suffered at the hands of Romans and Saracens. It was known during the Roman occupation of the country as Diospolis, the city of Jupiter. It is said to have been the native town of St. George, the patron saint of England, who is believed also to have been buried in the crypt of the church. The date of the erection of the original church is uncertain. The Saracens destroyed it in the eighth century ; it was rebuilt by the Crusaders in the eleventh, and destroyed by Saladin in 1191 A.D. The present Greek church has a nave and aisles, the pillars seem to have been of different ages, some of them may have belonged to the early churches that stood on the same site. In 415 A.D., a council of fourteen bishops was held there to try Pelagius for heresy. After some sharp discussion and exciting scenes among the theologians he was acquitted. Among the Mahommedan traditions is this one, that the final contest between Christ and Antichrist will take place at the gates of Lydda.

On our return to Ramleh we visited the public school of Lydda, situated on our right at the suburbs of the town. A door led into a court about forty feet square, surrounded by a high stone wall ; at the opposite side from the entrance was a door leading into the school, a room about thirty by twenty feet. A table stood in the centre of the room, on which were a few small books and leaves. A low bench extended along one side of the school for the use of the scholars, most of whom however were seated on the floor, being more comfortable and

suited to their usual custom. On entering, the babel of noise ceased at once. The children gathered round us with considerable curiosity and wished us peace. The teacher was a solemn-faced man, who made no demonstration of pleasure at our visit. I made use of all the Arabic I could command in our conversation, and as we were about leaving with the best wishes of the children, they made a universal and powerful demand for bukshish. This demand must be complied with, so we scattered some handfuls of paras along the school, and in a moment books were thrown aside and the entire school was scrambling in wild confusion on the floor. The infection reached the solemn-faced master, who was sitting on the table, and as we closed the door behind us the whole school was in the wildest uproar. As we were hastening back to Ramleh, a young lad from the school shouted behind us, in his shrill Syrian tone, "Hawadjah, shoof hinna,"—"Sir, look here." On looking round, a lad, bareheaded, clothed in a flashy gown, composed of all the colours of the rainbow, and with a sash about his middle, came running towards us. He was breathless. As soon as he could speak he said, with a solemn countenance and in a funereal tone, "Sir, I got nothing." As diligent and prudent men sometimes fail in the race of life, so this lad had failed in the scrambling for paras on the floor of the school. I gave him a bukshish and he returned with joy to Lydda, and we hastened to Ramleh.

At noon Latrûn was reached. It is a hill of considerable size, on the south side of the road to Jerusalem, and covered with ruins of ancient buildings. This is regarded as the site of Modin, so intimately associated with the history and wars of the Maccabean family. The ruins are evidently those of a fortress or of some structure of considerable size. It has been enclosed by a wall, traces of which are to be seen along the base of the hill, where also are some tombs evidently of great

antiquity. Tradition asserts that the penitent thief lived here, and used to rob travellers in the valley a short distance to the east, on their way to Jerusalem, hence the name *Latrûn*. From this we began to descend into the valley of *Ajalon*. On our left, at some distance, were some famous scenes in the early days of the Israelites, *Nebi Samwil*, *Beth Horon*, and farther north-east, *El Jib*, the ancient *Gibeon*. In some part of this valley, now covered with rich pasture, *Joshua* defeated the *Amorites* when the sun stood still on *Gibeon* and the moon in the valley of *Ajalon*. We were now in the hill country of *Judæa*; the road extended between the low, round hills covered at their base with vines, but higher up with scanty vegetation and stunted shrubs.

In the afternoon early, we reached *Kuriet El Enab*, the ancient *Kirjath Jearim*, the city of rocky forests, where the ark rested, when brought from *Beth Shemesh*. It was also called *Kirjath Baal*, the city of *Baal*, whose wild orgies seem to have been celebrated on these high mountains by the heathen inhabitants. The city stands high up on the shoulders of the mountains that surround it on the north, south and west. And as these mountains were, doubtless, wooded in ancient times, the name *Kirjath Jearim* would be well suited to a city located here. The most prominent object now is a church, which dates back to the crusading days. It is well preserved, the roof is covered with grass and weeds, the interior is divided into a nave and aisles. It was called the church of *Jeremiah* in the sixteenth century, from a tradition that made this the site of the birthplace of the prophet. As we rode through the valleys, the city had a picturesque appearance, far up the mountain, with its white, flat-roofed houses. Terraces rose up one above the other from the valley, covered with vines and fig trees. The men of *Kirjath Jearim* were sitting near the church, under the shade of olive trees, discuss-

ing the affairs of the village and the latest news from Joppa, and the countries beyond the sea. Along this valley probably the ark was taken by David, it must have been a rough road in those days over the hills, for it is terrible now, and as they came near that bald round hill on our left, with old ruins scattered along its breast, full of joy at the prospect of the ark's resting in Jerusalem, the ark shook, passing over the rough threshing floor, and Uzzah put forth his hand to stay it, and was slain, and it was taken to the house of Obed-Edom, and finally to Jerusalem.

Shortly before sunset, we reached Kuloniyeh, on our left far up on the brow of a hill. In the valley and along the base of the hill were apricot, pomegranate and fig trees. Some almond trees by the roadside were in bloom. I was desirous of entering Jerusalem in the early morning, and therefore concluded to abide at Kuloniyeh for the night. My companions preferred to hasten on to Jerusalem. I bade them good night and went in to lodge in a house kept by a Greek. The main room is about twenty feet square, at one corner of which was a counter from which he dispensed drinks of various kinds to the Russian and other pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem. The floor was the naked earth, a narrow bench extended round two sides of the room, and two very small windows admitted a little light. As thousands of pilgrims were going day and night along the road food was scarce. Black bread, hard as the stones on the road, wretched coffee, one small egg and a lemon, constituted the bill of fare. While the Greek was preparing this, I went out to visit the village, which was situated on the hill to the left. It contains a small population, but there are no ruins of importance. A small streamlet crosses the road here, said to be the one from which David gathered the smooth stones, with which he slew Goliath the Philistine. To the right as far as I could see in the fading light was Ain Karim,

the birthplace of John the Baptist. Kuloniyeh is the Arabic form of Colonia, and reminds us of the subjection of Palestine to the Roman Empire, and probably here and at other places, colonies of dismissed soldiers were formed. Some regard this as the site of Emmaus. About two miles north of Latrûn is the modern Amwas, a name that at once suggests Emmaus, which is, however, too far from Jerusalem, for Luke says it was threescore furlongs, while Amwas is more than twice that distance. Kuloniyeh, however, is too near Jerusalem. The site of Emmaus lies between Kuloniyeh and Kirjath Jearim, probably at the latter place itself. Thus the site of the modern village becomes a place of interest to every Christian, for there the ark rested containing the law of God engraved on stone, and itself the symbol of the divine presence, and there too, Christ the risen Saviour ate with His disciples, after His triumph over death. Nothing can be determined as to the site of Emmaus from the name itself, for there are no hot springs in the neighbourhood of the supposed site. Josephus states that the Emperor gave Emmaus to eight hundred of his soldiers; this was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, and probably was on the site of Kuriet El Enab, the ancient Kirjath Jearim. This suits well, as regards distance from Jerusalem, with the statements of Scripture. The two disciples took their evening meal in Emmaus, and before midnight, were with the disciples in Jerusalem. This journey over the rough roads, up the Judæan hills could have been accomplished from El-Enab but not from the distant Amwas.

Two Greeks, armed with dirks and pistols of curious shape, came in and wished me good night. They were a sinister looking pair, with fierce and hardened expression of face. They remained for nearly two hours interested in my movements. This led me to watch them with some degree of alarm; after they left I retired to a small room which I extem-

porized into a fortress and set up all available defences in the shape of broken stools against the door.

In the early morning I started on foot. Pilgrims were journeying to Jerusalem, some, like myself, walking, others on mules or donkeys; while others had their whole earthly possessions on the back of a stately camel. The air of the morning was bracing, the scenery was bold, and every hill near the city was an object of interest as witnesses of great deeds and famous men, whose name will outlive that of mighty nations. On each side of the road, deep valleys swept down between the hills, along the base and up the sides of which were growing vines, olive and fig trees. An hour's fatiguing march brought me to the high plateau that stretches towards Jerusalem, houses began to appear, countrymen were driving sheep and goats into the city for sale. From these men I learned the names of the villages that dotted the hills on every side. Soon I began to descend towards the right, and in a moment the City of God burst on my view. The rising sun was bathing with golden light the hills that encircle Jerusalem, the walls also and the sacred spots in and around the city. Mount Zion appeared, and the buildings that enclose the royal tomb of David, the white walls of the Arminian convent and the Episcopalian church were seen, and nearer stood the tower of Hippicus close by the Jaffa gate. The feeling of joy almost overwhelmed me. No such impression is produced by the splendid ruins of Rome or Athens, or by the colossal ruins of Egypt's greatest and most venerable shrines. They are the ruins of genius and power, but this city trodden under foot of the Gentiles is the one to which every sinner turns his soul, for within its present walls the Son of God died to save the world from condemnation and death. One of the earliest and strongest desires of my life was realized, and I thanked God I felt as if I could weep for joy, as I thought of its temple,

with its splendour of cedar wood, precious stones, and gold and silver, the glory of Jehovah in its holy of holies, the holy prophets and illustrious kings, who had trodden its streets, and, above all, Christ the Lord, who had made atonement for sin. On my right were the private hospital for lepers, and the pool of Upper Gihon, on the left was the Russian hospice, its courts and halls crowded with pilgrims. Nearer the city is the quarter of the Jews, without the walls, where they make a living by working olive and Jericho wood into souvenirs. A market is held just outside the Jaffa Gate, where bundles of sticks, grass and vegetables are sold. I passed through the Jaffa Gate, under whose arch two soldiers were keeping guard with drawn sword. On passing under the shadow of the tower of Hippicus, and along the street of David, the words of the inspired king of Israel, expressed the feelings of my heart: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king."*

The ancient name of Jerusalem was Salem, of which Melchizedek was king. In later times it became the chief fortress of the Jebusites and was named Jebus. This fortified place occupied Mount Zion, and must have been of considerable strength, for it defied the prowess of Israel until the time of David, who took the castle and called it the city of David. The Valley of Hinnom protected it on the west and south, the Tyropœon valley on the east, and from the Jaffa Gate, a valley at places eighty feet deep extended to the Tyropœon. These were the limits of the ancient city and helped immensely to make it impregnable. It rapidly increased in population and extent during the reigns of David and Solomon, who built in 1011 B.C., the great temple, on the threshing floor of Araunah

* Psalm xlviii. 2.

on Mount Moriah, and adorned it with Oriental magnificence. In 588 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar destroyed this temple, plundered it of its rich vessels and ornaments and carried the people into captivity. Titus appeared before the walls of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., with four legions, the olive trees were cut down, houses levelled, and thus the Valley of Jehoshaphat was filled up. Mounds were raised against the walls which were soon breached. The Romans concentrated their forces on the north of the temple and also near the Pool of Hezekiah on the west of the city, and were determined to utterly destroy the Jews, who, driven by the wildest fanaticism, fought in the narrow streets and in the courts of the temple, which was defiled with streams of human blood and dead bodies. They cried to Jehovah for aid, but He did not hear them. Their struggle was useless against the will of God and the prowess of the invincible legions. The temple, with its magnificent porches, its massive marble columns and richly carved capitals, was burned, and all its glory passed away; one stone was not left standing on another that was not thrown down. And thus the prophecy of Christ was fulfilled. This is an important fact of history verifying the words of Christ, and although Titus gave orders to save the temple, it was impossible, for the Lord makes the very wrath of man to serve Him. The Roman soldier who applied the torch to the temple was merely gratifying his own hatred of the Jews, but he did a deed also that has engraved on the pages of history the truth of the Lord's words, spoken more than forty years before the event. Josephus says "1,100,000 perished, and thousands were carried away captive, to add to the glory of the conqueror's triumph in Rome."*

The exactions and indignities inflicted on the pilgrims in the early part of the eleventh century were told in the halls

* Wars of Jerusalem, vi. 9. 3.

of the nobles and in the market places in Europe, and a desire to rescue the holy places from the hands of the infidels stirred Europe to its foundations. As the terrible tornado sweeps over the prairie, unimpeded by forests or mountains, so all classes were nerved with irresistible zeal and anger. William of Malmesbury says, "The Welshman left his hunting, the Dane his drinking party, and the Norwegian his raw fish, all eager to join the expedition to the Holy Land." Some of them thought to atone for their own sins by punishing the sins of others. However wrong their ideas of duty and God's will, their resolution was a unit. On the 7th of June, 1099 A.D., the Crusaders appeared before the walls of Jerusalem. The sun flashed from shield and spear, and their banners were unfurled. The red cross was seen on the breasts of forty thousand resolute and fearless men who forgot their dangers, dismounted from their horses, and kissed the earth on which the Son of God had trodden. The Saracens fought against them with the bravery of barbarians, and their hatred of Christians; and the Crusaders gave up all for lost. But William of Tyre says, at that time "a soldier of the Cross was seen on the Mount Olivet. How he came there no one knew. The omen was auspicious. His shield was resplendent with gold. He moved in the direction of the city and beckoned the Crusaders to follow." Their hearts were cheered, they made a long and mighty attack, the walls were scaled and Jerusalem was taken. The Tyropœon valley and the narrow streets were filled with the slain. Over heaps of the dead and dying the Crusaders chased the enemy. Dead bodies in thousands lay in the July sun, infecting the air with pestilence. Ten thousand fell within the area on which the temple stood, in places the blood is said to have reached the horses' bridles. Jerusalem was again baptized in blood, and her sacred places defiled with dead. In 136 A.D., Hadrian, who had ploughed the foundations of

the temple, named the city *Ælia Capitolina*, and Christians and pagans only were allowed to reside within the city. Jerusalem from this time lay in ruins till the time of Constantine, who did much to rescue it from its utter desolation. For centuries it experienced the terrible calamities of war, until 1517 A.D., when Sultan Selim I. conquered it and planted the Turkish flag on its towers, the symbol that yet it was to be trodden under foot of the basest of the Gentiles, that yet it had not atoned for the crucifixion of the Son of God.



JERUSALEM.

CHAPTER XIV.

JERUSALEM AND ITS HOLY PLACES.

“There are such outlines, strongly drawn and ineffaceable, which make it absolutely certain that we have the Holy City, with all its interesting localities before us.”—*The Land and the Book*, p. 627.



THE present walls, built in 1545 A.D., are from twenty to forty feet high, and from ten to fifteen feet thick, and are nearly two miles and a half in circumference. Some of the stones of the lower tiers, at the south-east corner, and on the brow of Mount Zion, and also near to the Damascus Gate are ancient, and measure from fifteen to twenty feet in length, and probably belong to the time of Herod and Christ. One regards them with a feeling akin to veneration, for on these very stones the apostles and the Lord Himself may have looked. Along the west wall from the Jaffa Gate southward, a deep fosse still exists, and the same is seen on the north wall, near the Damascus Gate, where the rocky foundation is levelled to prevent the enemy from scaling the wall. Josephus names three walls that enclosed Jerusalem* : the first enclosed the City of David. It began at the tower of Hippicus and extended eastward to the Xistus, which would be almost in line with the modern street of David. Starting from the same point it went a little west, then south, and sweeping eastward

* War of the Jews, v. 4. 1. 2.

over the Tyropœon valley, it included Mount Zion and Ophel and joined the south-east corner of the temple. This wall was fortified by David and Solomon; and, as the city was surrounded by deep valleys on every side, it would be a city of great strength. And as the modern Christian quarter would be covered with trees, and flowers of richest hue and sweetest fragrance would bloom in their season, the whole scene would be one of great beauty under a mild clear sky. The king looking out from the roof of his palace and feeling secure against invading foes, could well say, "the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north. The kings were assembled, they saw it, and so they marvelled; they were troubled and hasted away."† The second wall was built to enclose the northern quarter, in which direction the city extended. It began at the Gate Gennath in the first wall. Josephus gives no account of the direction of this second wall; he merely states it extended from Gennath and reached as far as the tower of Antonia. It is probable this gate was not far east from Hippicus, and that the wall extended northward along the brow of Akra, and having reached the limit required would extend east to Antonia. If Gennath were far east from Hippicus, or if the wall ran in direct line to Antonia, an enemy on the brow of Akra, would overlook the wall and the city and have a strong vantage ground. The third wall was begun by Agrippa, twelve years after the Crucifixion. It began at Hippicus, reached northward to the tower of Psephinus, and thence eastward by the tombs of the kings, that are now to be seen far north of the present walls, and extending south from the "monument of the Fuller" joined the old wall at the valley of the Kedron. From the statements made by Josephus in regard to the people filling up the face of the hills

† Psalm xlviii. 2, 5.

in order to have a larger area for the temple, it is probable that the Tyropœon was filled up to some extent and also the inequalities of the western side of the Kedron. The temple, or the temple area, would extend to the brow of the hill above the Kedron, and if so, the wall from the "monument of the Fuller" would join the north-east wall of the temple, or extend a little beyond it, and join the old wall at the south-east, near Ophel.

In order that the reader may see Jerusalem as it is every day, and the sacred and historic places, let us enter the Jaffa Gate and go through its narrow and quaint streets. There are four gates in the walls, Damascus Gate on the north, St. Stephen's on the east, Zion Gate on the south, Jaffa Gate on the west. Inside this gate is the tower of Hippicus or the tower of David, on our right. The lower tiers are composed of stones about thirteen feet long, chiselled along the edges, and probably belonged to the original tower of which Josephus speaks. He says it was composed of large stones, and was twenty-five cubits square and thirty cubits high; on the top was a reservoir and a building, raising the whole structure eighty cubits. The Street of David, on which we stand, inside the Jaffa Gate, extends east to the temple area. It is about eighteen feet broad, and like all the streets of the city paved with round stones that render it difficult for men and animals to walk with safety. According to Oriental custom, rubbish is thrown on the streets, and after rain, travelling on the streets is dangerous, for if one slips on the smooth stones he naturally throws out his arms to save himself. Probably, a donkey laden with fruit, or a camel with stones, will be behind, and the chances are he will strike the donkey or Mahommedan driver in the face, who will return the blow with interest and an oath, and crush him into the stone walls. On this street are butchers' shops, fruit shops, and grain dealers, and along by

the Tyropœon are to be found Jews who can sell almost every article under the sun.

Turning to the left, at about five minutes' walk from the Jaffa Gate, the traveller enters Christian Street extending northward along the Christian quarter. Jewellery, cloth and provision shops are on this street. Pilgrims purchase here wax candles for offerings in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and frankincense and myrrh. A photographer does a thriving trade on this street. Here also is Shapira's shop, who has become famous by his attempt to impose on the British Museum authorities, modern sheep-skins from Moab, as skillfully manipulated as the pottery gods from the same country a few years ago, all which are frauds, as anyone may know who examines the pile standing on his shelves. The pottery is far too fresh and the characters too perfect to have belonged even to the beginning of the Christian era. Here also are money changers. A small table stands on the street at the door; on it is a box in which are gold and silver coins. In the same way these Jews do their brokerage-trade as in the days of our Lord, who found in the temple the changers of money, and overthrew their tables. These modern representatives are as ready to take advantage of pilgrims and strangers as their ancestors were, and would gladly invade the holiest places of the Mosque of Omar with their little tables, but the fear of death is stronger than their love of gold, and so they wisely ply their trade in the streets.

The shops are generally small, and if the owner is a Mahommedan, he smokes on his mastaba, waiting for Allah to send a customer, whom he may fleece. If he is a Greek or Syrian, he sits on a chair and waits for the same purpose. The shelves and floor are occupied with baskets of oranges, dates, rice and kharûb pods, and occasionally in these shops are a few sacks of wheat and flour. The dry goods shops are

of the same size, and contain silks from Damascus, coarse abyahs for the country people, and a stock of European cotton goods of the cheapest kind and with the most brilliant colours.

Christian Street receives the water-shed of Akra on the north-west. After a rain storm it has the appearance of a small stream, through which one plunges, thankful that it is a short street. As there is no drainage, the water lies until it percolates into the earth or is evaporated. On Easter week, this street was crowded with Latin, Greek, Armenian and Russian pilgrims. Many of the rough stones were out and the holes in the street filled with water and garbage. One is forced to hurry through the dense crowd to escape the stench of the Russians in their sheep-skin coats, fur caps and monster boots. But alas, one of these ponderous pilgrims, or worse still, a monster camel plunges into a hole, and unless the traveller makes a quick escape, I found by unpleasant experience, that he would be drenched from head to feet with filthy water and black mud. This state of things has existed evidently from remotest times in Jerusalem. David says of the wicked, "I did cast them out as dirt in the street."* And Micah says, the enemy of the church "shall be trodden down as the mire of the streets."† Via Dolorosa extends eastward from its junction with Christian Street, passing under the arch of Ecce Homo and by the Pool of Bethesda to St. Stephen's Gate. One important street extends from the Damascus Gate almost due south to Zion Gate. It is narrow, and for a considerable distance is arched over, houses are built on the arches, while openings exist at intervals along the street to admit light and air. This is adopted for the same purpose as the grass mats over the Egyptian bazaars, to protect the workmen from Judæan heat and the rains of spring and autumn. This is the street where

* Psalm xviii. 42.

† Micah vii. 10,

the carpenters, coppersmiths, tinsmiths, and shoemakers, are found plying their trade on the street. The modern streets of Jerusalem are from twenty to sixty feet above the level of those in the days of our Lord. The city has often been laid in ruins, and the feet of heathen soldiers defiled its holy places. These ruins have been levelled and a new city built on a higher site than the preceding one, so that excavations made in any part of Jerusalem to-day reveal broken columns and richly carved capitals, and massive foundations of palaces, temples or ancient walls.

The houses of Jerusalem, except the churches and mosques, make no imposing appearance. The entrance is from the street into a court, in which are flowers, fragrant shrubs, and occasionally an orange tree growing. There are rooms around the sides of this court and also upper rooms, if the inmates are of the wealthier class of citizens. The windows have glass or ornamental lattice work, the openings of which are very fine, thus admitting the fresh air, while excluding the rain sufficiently. The walls are constructed of limestone, of great thickness, and plastered within. The roofs are flat with an oval or round dome, rising in the centre. On the roof the people spend very much of their time; the Armenians praying, the Mahomedans with folded hands facing Mecca, and the Jews eagerly looking over into the area of the temple and praying for the coming of Messiah to deliver the city out of the hands of the Gentiles. I have seen the Jews day after day, towards sunset, on their housetops pouring out their bitter lamentations to Jehovah. From the earliest times the Orientals spent a large part of their time on the housetop. There Peter saw the vision at Joppa; there, in the days of Jeremiah the people went up to pour out their lamentations alone, and there, when the Israelites had sunk into idolatry, they worshipped the host of heaven.

The water supply of Jerusalem is ample from its numerous fountains and cisterns. Almost every house has one or two cisterns in which the water has been kept pure and sweet. A small groove conveys the rain that falls on the flat roofs to a hole at one corner, from which a narrow pipe conducts it to the cistern beneath. Five minutes' fast walking will bring us to the Upper Gihon from the Jaffa Gate. It is situated at the broad shallow source of the Valley of Hinnom, and receives the water from the gently sloping hills on the west. It is about three hundred feet long, two hundred broad, and twenty-five feet deep. Stone steps lead down to it from one or two corners; the cement, nearly an inch in thickness, is perfect in a few places along the sides. An aqueduct, visible along the side of the road, conveys the water to the Pool of Hezekiah, within the city. It is evidently old, and may easily have existed in the days of Hezekiah, who took counsel with his princes and mighty men and "stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land. He stopped also the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down the west side of the city of David."* May not this indicate that when the Assyrians invaded Jerusalem the king closed up the sources that supplied Gihon, and by a hidden aqueduct brought the water into the city on the west side of Mount Zion?

The Episcopalian Mission School occupies a part of Mount Zion outside the present walls, but the old wall ran along the brow of Zion and so enclosed this area. In the garden of this school are large reservoirs and one deep well, with steps leading down to them. They have the appearance of great antiquity, and may have received their supply, along with others, from Gihon, in Hezekiah's time. Almost opposite

* 2 Chronicles xxxii. 4, 30.

this school, in the Valley of Hinnom, is the Lower Gihon, the modern Birket es Sultan, nearly six hundred feet long and two hundred and fifty broad. The road to Bethlehem crosses at the southern end of this fountain, while the aqueduct from the Pools of Solomon pass along its western side, then sweep along the brow of Zion over the Tyropæon to the temple area. Probably the water was conducted from this immense pool to irrigate the royal gardens and terraced slopes further down the valley. It was near this spot that Solomon was anointed king, the news of which frightened Adonijah and forced him to flee to the altar for safety. Further down, near the junction of Hinnom and the Valley of Jehoshaphat is the Pool of Siloam, the modern Silwan. This is one of the few places about Jerusalem which have retained their scriptural name. Isaiah calls it "Shiloah," whose waters flow softly, while in Nehemiah it is called "Shelach," which the Septuagint has translated "pool of the sheep skins." And perhaps from this fact some have identified it with Bethesda, the pool by the sheep market. There seems little doubt however that Silwan is the Siloam of our Lord's time, to which He sent the blind man. This pool is the one to which the women and children of the Village of Siloam, and of Jerusalem come to wash now. The running stream flowing from the upper into the lower fountain further down gives them always clear water. It is probable it may have been used for such purposes in our Lord's day, and He would naturally send the blind man there to remove the clay from his eyes. Josephus is very definite in his description of Siloam, and leaves little room for doubt. He says, "The Tyropæon extended as far as Siloam,"* which is the identical site of the present Pool of Siloam; then further he describes it by saying it has "a valley under it and one beside it,"† which is true of this pool and of

* Wars of the Jews, v. 4. 1.† *Ibid*, v. 12. 2 ; vi. 8. 5.

no other outside of Jerusalem, for the valley of Hinnom is below it, and Jehoshaphat beside it on the east.

Benjamin of Tudela, in the twelfth century, mentions the spring of Shiloach, which runs into the Kedron, and in his day it was covered. At present in the bottom of this pool are two rows of broken columns which evidently supported a covering over the pool, and no other outside the city could be covered except En-Rogel, which is a very deep well, and would require no such protection. The Pool of Siloam is fifty feet long, eighteen broad and nineteen deep. Desolation reigns about it now; there are no blooming flowers, or fragrant shrubs, or shady fruit trees. The wretched Village of Silwan stands opposite on the brow of the hill, Ophel is covered with rubbish, and over the Tyropœon and up the eastern brow of Mount Zion I could trace the outline of terraces probably on the very site of David's garden and close to the steps that led up to the city of David, near the Pool of Siloah. This fountain is connected by a channel hewn through the rock, with Birket Sitti Myriam, the Virgin's fountain, in the Kedron. Siloam was supplied from the aqueduct that Hezekiah led round the west of Zion, for it is probable the water was conducted into this channel from the temple. At times the water of the Virgin's fountain rises quickly and again recedes as quickly; sometimes it is sweet, at other times bitter. This would be accounted for by the fact that the water from the mosque of Omar might be allowed to flow abundantly at one time and retained at another. The tradition of the ignorant people of Silwan is, that a dragon is in the fountain, and when he sleeps the water rises, but when he awakes he drinks so much that the water becomes low.

The water in Siloam rises to a certain height, then flows through the rock into stone troughs further down. Frequently, as I passed, the women of Siloam were washing, while their lazy husbands were sleeping along the base of Ophel, or on

the roof of their house. The washing is by no means elaborate, and occupies only a brief time, for the wardrobe of the common people is of the scantiest, and Orientals dislike expending much labour, even for the sake of cleanliness. The common people possess only one outer garment, which serves as an article of clothing in the daytime and for a bed at night. The mother remains at home while the daughter washes her mother's wardrobe, and the daughter does the same, in her turn, while her mother performs this duty for her. I have watched the lords of creation asleep, at noonday, near the Pool of Siloam, while the women were washing their abyah. The gown is taken by one end and drawn a few times through the running water, after which it is spread out on a large smooth stone. The women then sit down as most of the mechanics do when working at their trade, and taking a flat piece of wood about two feet long, six inches broad, and one inch thick, they beat the gown with all their might. They swing it over their head like a miniature flail, and when the right arm is tired toss it with dexterity into the left. In an incredibly short time the gown is washed without soap or washboard, hung up to the sun, and in a few hours the owner may be seen threading his way through the market place or in some mosque or church at his devotions.

A few minutes' walk down the Kedron from Siloam is Bir Eyub, or En-Rogel. It is a well, one hundred and twenty-five feet deep, lined with large stones. The boundary between Judah and Benjamin passed at En-Rogel. It is known as "the well of Nehemiah," and "the well of fire," from the tradition that the fire from the altar in the temple was thrown into it at the time of the captivity. The name "Eyub" may have been given it because Joab came here with Adonijah, when he aspired to the throne of his father, and after Solomon was anointed king at Gihon, fled to the temple and was slain

at the horns of the altar. Josephus merely states it was outside the city in the king's garden.* This description suits the present Bir Eyub, for it was outside the wall that enclosed Ophel, and the king's garden would not extend so far up the narrow gorge of the Kedron as the Virgin's fountain, but on the south-east slope of Zion and down from the junction of the Hinnom and the Kedron, where it would be watered by Siloam and the water from En-Rogel. And besides it complies better than any other well or spring on this side of the city with all the requirements of Scripture.

Outside St. Stephen's Gate is a large pool and inside of the walls, on the north side of the Haram is Bethesda, the pool by the sheep market, partly filled with rubbish and almost dry. It is uncertain whether this is an ancient pool or a trench dug to protect the second wall against the assaults of the Roman soldiers. On the west side of the city is the Pool of Hezekiah, two hundred and fifty feet long and one hundred and fifty broad, and supplied by water from the Upper Gihon. It is possible this pool may have been dug in Hezekiah's time, when the springs outside the city were closed to harass the Assyrians, and this immense reservoir receiving the water from Arka, would form a chief source of internal supply during a siege. On the north of Jerusalem, where olive trees and grain fields are seen now, there are numerous cemented cisterns hewn out of the limestone. This part of the city once was enclosed by the third wall, and these cisterns that are dangerous traps to belated travellers, once helped the water supply of the city. In the many sieges of Jerusalem, and national struggles, the citizens often perished by hunger, but the water supply was always ample.

The population of Jerusalem is about thirty thousand,

* Ant. vii. 14. 4.

about one half of whom are Jews, the remainder consisting of Greeks, Latins, Mahommedans, Armenians and Copts. Many of the Jews live outside the Jaffa gate, in houses built for them by philanthropists in Europe and America. They are carpenters and workers in olive wood, while a few are money changers. They have a school not far from the Upper Gihon. It consists of one room, about twenty feet square, which was filled with small children the day I visited it. The master sat on a bench with a class of small boys before him, who were swaying their bodies backward and forward, and in a sing-song style were committing to memory the simple words and rules of the Hebrew language. The other children were seated on side benches, and supposed to be studying, but were eagerly watching my companion and myself. The master informed us of his work, and though there was an extreme indifference to school discipline on the part of both scholars and teacher, yet he was evidently an earnest, faithful and painstaking man.

In the city the Jews wear a gown of sombre colour, extending from their neck to their feet; on their head, a cap, the crown of which is velvet, and round the lower part runs a band of fur. The women do not veil their face; the younger women wear a white garment which covers their head and the whole body. The Jewesses have decidedly a happier appearance than their Mahommedan sisters. One looks with extreme interest on this strange race, as they appear in the city of their fathers. Strong in the belief that Messiah may come at any hour to deliver them, they patiently endure all insults that can be heaped on them. They glide quietly through the streets of Jerusalem, keeping close to the walls, unwilling to attract attention. They are spat on and abused; for the Jews there is almost no redress in Jerusalem. The dominant Turk excludes them from the area on which their famous temple stood. Gentiles may tread on that enclosure

and handle stones and pillars that may have been part of the first temple, but if a Jew dared to cross the threshold of the Haram enclosure, a dagger would be plunged into his heart. On the south-west of the temple area is the Jewish wailing-



THE JEWS' WAILING-PLACE.

place, outside the enclosure of the Haram. There, every Friday, men, women and children assemble and pray for the deliverance of Jerusalem and their country. The day I visited the spot, a venerable Rabbi read a part of the lxxix. Psalm:

"O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps. We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us. How long, Lord? Wilt thou be angry forever? Shall thy jealousy burn like fire?" The people uttered responses, and tears were flowing down the cheeks of old and young. Some wrote supplications on slips of paper and pressed them into the small openings in the wall; others were kissing the massive, old stones. The grief and bitterness of heart were genuine, and the scene impresses the beholder with a strong feeling of sympathy. The stones are large and old. Dr. Thomson says they certainly are "not later than the time of Herod, perhaps long before." A little farther south, after climbing walls and over mounds of rubbish, the site of the Arch discovered by Dr. Robinson was reached. The stones at the corner of the Temple enclosure are over twenty feet long and one or two about five feet thick; some of them are broken and displaced by earthquakes and sieges, but others are perfect, and so closely jointed that it is scarcely possible to trace the line of separation. The stones are bevelled round the edges, and are so superior in size to those in the city wall or in the Tower of Hippicus, and appear to belong to a remoter antiquity, that it is not unreasonable to say they may have belonged even to the first Temple. At this point is the Arch that supported the bridge that stretched across the Tyropœon. The bridge is computed to have been about three hundred and fifty feet long and extended to Mount Zion. This is probably the Arch of the bridge mentioned by Josephus which connected the upper city with the Temple. Beneath it, in those days, the valley was densely occupied by shops and houses, now it is an area of ruins, covered with weeds, cactus and mounds of rubbish. On this bridge Titus stood and tried to persuade the Jews to submit to the Roman

Emperor, but they refused, and the war raged with fury until Jerusalem sank in ashes and blood.*

About half way north on Christian Street, I descended a narrow winding street and emerged on a marble-paved court in front of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. As it was Easter it was crowded with pilgrims from many lands, Greeks, Armenians and Russians, speaking strange languages, and clothed in costumes of divers shapes and flashy colours. Old men on crutches, young men, and women with infants in their arms were all going and coming in a steady stream of human life. Seated on the stone flags of the court were men and women from all parts of Palestine selling crosses, beads, candles, roses of Jericho, and mother-of-pearl work from Bethlehem. The church is said originally to have had five stories; only two remain, and the third is in ruins. Two doors face the court area on the south side. One is closed, and entrance is gained by the western one. The lower part of the church has an appearance of antiquity, and over the doors are some highly ornamental works of art. On entering the door, I came at once to "the stone of unction," before which men and women were kneeling, and kissing it. Turning to the left near the Turkish soldiers who were there to keep the peace between the rival races that claim this common sacred spot, then going north, I entered the rotunda. The dome is fifty-five feet in diameter, and is supported by eighteen massive piers. Under the dome is the Holy Sepulchre covered by a small marble church, twenty-six feet long, eighteen broad, about twenty high, surmounted by a dome and ornamented in front by slender columns. The first room is the Chapel of the Angel, beyond which is the small room that encloses the tomb. To the right is a marble slab, about two feet above the floor, and extending the whole

* The Land and the Book, p. 690.

length of the room. This is said to cover the rocky tomb in which our Lord lay. The marble floor is worn with the feet and knees of millions of pilgrims, and the slab is worn thin in places by their kisses. Light is supplied by olive oil in a number of golden lamps, and the walls are profusely adorned with silver and gold and precious stones.

This church, by vast multitudes of people, Greeks, Latins, Armenians and Copts, and Christians from Britain and America, is believed to enclose the spots on which the two most important events on earth took place, the Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Lord. Is there any evidence to support ancient tradition? Some writers have placed the scene of the crucifixion on the north of the city, above the grotto of Jeremiah and at other points of Jerusalem. But no tradition has ever attached to this place. At the time of the Crucifixion, "the earth did quake and the rocks rent," * but there is no evidence of an earthquake or any other force having disturbed within recent times the rocks on the northern part of the city. The information of Scripture is limited and supplies no definite data in regard to the place of Crucifixion. It occurred outside the gate, and near to the city and close to a road leading to the country, and near a garden which was the tomb of Joseph. It was called "the place of skulls,"* and in Hebrew Golgotha. This spot may have been named so because it was a place of public execution, and the skulls of the dead would be the ghastly objects that would ever meet the eye of those who visited the spot, or it may merely denote a slightly elevated place, round and smooth in the form of a skull. The Evangelists do not say it was a mount, but a "place," yet the term place of a skull would perhaps denote an elevated position. If it occurred on Olivet, or in the valley of Jehoshaphat or Hinnom, would it not be reasonable to suppose

* Matt. xxvii. 51. † Luke xxiii. 33.

that the Evangelists would have given the name of the place where our Lord was crucified? Hence, I think the site must be sought for on the north or north-west of Jerusalem. Neither the shape of the hill itself, nor tradition, nor fact, support the theory in favour of the hill over the grotto of Jeremiah, and no other place in that part beyond the modern walls has any claim to this honour.

Though the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is in the heart of the modern city, it was not so in our Lord's time. Then there were only two walls, for the Agrippa-wall was not built until 45 A.D. The site of this church, I think, must have been outside the second wall which began at the gate Gennath, for if that wall extended north along the brow of Akra so far as to include the site of this church, the rock would have been cut to form a level foundation for the walls. No such line of cutting however has yet been found, and besides the wall would have been commanded from the top of Akra and would have been almost useless for protection. Hence it seems more probable that the wall ran north, following the base of Akra for some distance, then east and north-east to Antonia. I got through an old gate, and then on the roof of a house a short distance east of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and could trace the ruins of a very old wall extending in a north-easterly direction, a little south of the church, and so left its site outside of the wall. From the corner at which I stood, it ran in an almost northerly direction. There were one or two projections that could be traced, which might have been the foundations of towers in the wall. The stones in this ruined wall were old, and may have been taken from other buildings since the Roman period. But is it not possible they may have been built after the destruction of the city on the old foundation of the second wall? The Church of the Holy Sepulchre incloses a spur of Akra which juts out towards the Tyropeon,

and the rock can be traced going down the steps to the Chapel of the Finding of the Cross, which is only a natural cave in the rock and may be one of the old tombs hewn out of the rock. Other tombs can be seen west of the rotunda, with every mark of antiquity about them. Along the base and brow of Akra would be the natural site for a garden of olives, fig-trees and vines. These tombs would be hewn out of the brow of the hill according to the custom of those times, as may be witnessed by the numerous tombs in the limestone rock in the valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat.

Sweeping away the rubbish of monkish traditions and absurdities there remains a foundation of historic truth, which can support the theory that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre covers the spot of the Lord's tomb and probably his crucifixion. When the city was taken by Titus the Christians fled from the city, but it was occupied again in the time of Hadrian, 117 A.D., when he filled up the tomb of Christ and erected on it a shrine to Venus. Constantine's mother, Helena, visited Jerusalem in 325 A.D., and built a Christian church over the spot, which was dedicated by Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem, in 325 A.D. The crypt of this ancient church is used now as a cistern by the Copts. The site of the tomb seems to have been a fact well-known, for there was no searching for the locality; there were no rival localities mentioned by Eusebius. John lived to the close of the first century, and could give information to the Christians about it; and is it not improbable that the early Christians, so full of love for Christ, and zealous for the truth of the Gospel, would ever lose sight of those spots so intimately associated with their joy and salvation? The silence of Paul and other later apostolic writers is no evidence that those places were not regarded as of any importance, for he does not mention the site of many places which must have had an interest to the Jewish converts and were well known to himself.

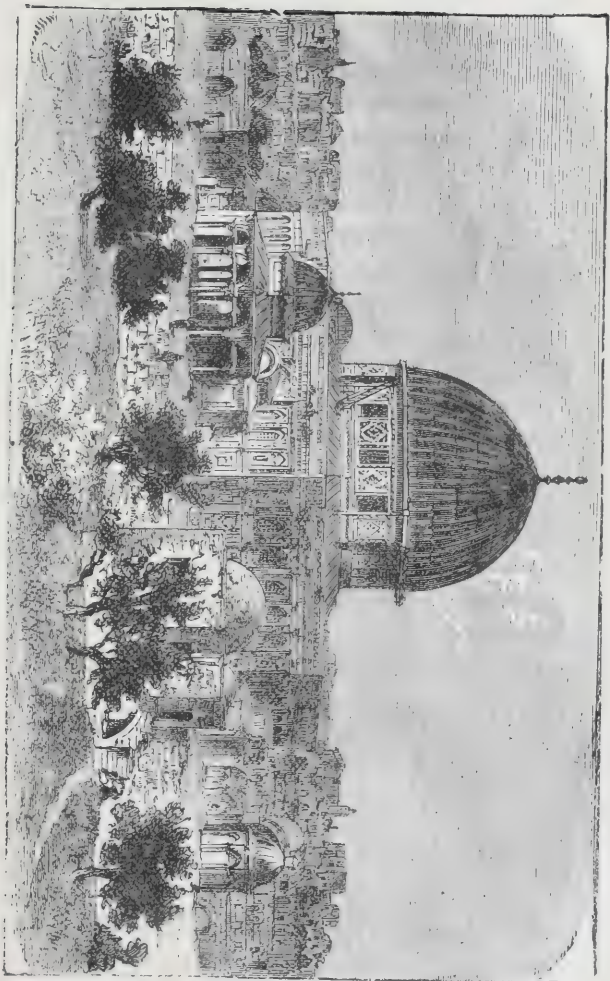
In 614 A.D., 1010 A.D., and again in 1808 A.D., the church was destroyed, but it was always rebuilt on the same site, only with increased splendour and wealth. On the whole I believe the evidence from topography and history inclines strongly in favour of the site covered by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. On the outside walls are sculptured the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem, but in the tomb He triumphed when He rose from the dead to complete his work of redemption. Above the gilded dome is the cross, which points heavenward where the risen king now reigns, the gates of whose everlasting kingdom are thrown wide open for all who believe in Him.

The Haram enclosure, in the centre of which stands the Mosque of Omar, is situated on Moriah, one of the four mountains on which Jerusalem is built. It is separated from Olivet by the Kedron and from Zion by the Tyropœon valley. On this mount in Josephus' opinion Abraham intended to offer up Isaac, and this was the site of the threshing floor of Ornan, the Jebusite, which David bought for six hundred shekels of gold and built an altar unto the Lord and offered burnt offerings.* There also Solomon built the first temple on earth to Jehovah, and adorned it with all the treasures that wealth and wisdom could command. Under the guidance of a kawass I entered the enclosure from the cotton merchants' gate; the paved enclosure is sixteen hundred feet from north to south on the east side, fifteen hundred feet on the west side, the north end is one thousand feet from east to west, and the south end nine hundred feet. The limestone rock rises to the surface at the north-west corner, where there is a thin strata of soil, and a few olive and cypress trees grow in this part of the area. Arches, oratories, and traditional sites of events that never occurred are very numerous over the whole of this extensive platform. Ascend-

*1 Chron. xxi. 21, 25, 26.

ing a few steps I reached an elevated plateau in the centre of which stands the mosque, an octagonal building, lined on the exterior with marble and higher up with blue tiling, and surmounted by a dome, on the top of which is a gilded crescent which can be seen from a long distance glittering in the bright sunlight. I put on yellow slippers at the eastern gate, for infidel boots would pollute the sacred place, and there entered the mosque. The walls are covered with beautiful marble, the interior of the dome and upper part of the walls are covered with mosaics of many colours. Here and in the Mosque of El-Aksa are pillars carved like the twisted strands of a rope, the capitals of which, in the form of doves, have been mutilated by Mahommadan fanatics. Probably they belonged to the courts of the second Temple or to the Temple of Solomon itself, for the style of workmanship is not Grecian, Roman or Saracenic. The windows contain richly coloured glass, and quotations from the Koran are arranged around the interior of the dome. On the floor is a slab with a number of golden headed nails, one of which is taken out at the end of every epoch. Only three and a half remain, and when they are removed the end of the world will come. And the Mahomedan tradition is that both Mahommed and Jesus will then come. At their advent a line, fine as a thread, will be stretched across the valley of Jehoshaphat, one end of which will be fastened to a piece of column now built into the eastern wall of Jerusalem, and the other end fastened to the Mount of Olives. At one end Mahommed will stand, at the other Jesus, and all who can walk over that thread will be admitted into Paradise and the others perish.

Immediately under the dome is Es-Sakhrah, the Rock. It is the levelled top of Mount Moriah, about sixty feet long and fifty-five broad, and five feet above the floor of the mosque. This is called the Stone of Foundation, and was the nucleus



THE MOSQUE OF OMAR.

according to the Talmud, around which the world was formed. When Solomon brought the Ark from the Tabernacle on Mount Zion to the Temple, the Talmud states it was placed on the Stone of Foundation. On the south-east there are a few steps descending to a cave in the rock, above is an opening to the top of the Sakhrah ; below the stone floor of the cave it is hollow, and, as Dr. Thomson says, this may have been the receptacle for the blood and other matter from the burnt-offerings, and which was thence washed down through subterranean passages to the south-east into the valley of Hinnom. The Mahommedan priests, however, inform the people that it is the dismal abode of the wicked, whose moaning can occasionally be heard, and this absurdity the guide will repeat with unwavering belief in its truth.

It is probable the present enclosure is of the same extent as in our Lord's time, and encloses the site of the Temple of Solomon, which Josephus says was built upon a strong hill, and in future ages the people added new banks, and the hill became a large plain.* Herod repaired and beautified the second Temple, and encompassed a piece of land twice as large as before enclosed. The author of the Jerusalem Itinerary, who visited Jerusalem in 333 A.D., says two statues of Hadrian were on the site of the Temple of Solomon, and these statues were near a pierced rock to which the Jews come every year and anoint it with oil. Jerome says, these statues were on the site of the Holy of Holies. If this be so, on that rock rested the Ark of the Covenant and the mercy seat ; it was bathed by the glory of the Shekinah, and on it the High Priest alone trod once a year. It is at least, probable, that it was enclosed in the Temple, and that the altar of burnt offering was close to the south-east part of this rock ; and if the Temple, excluding

* Wars of the Jews, v. 5. 1.

the porch, was sixty cubits long, it is quite possible this rock may have been included in the Holy of Holies. The Mahomedans venerate the Es-Sakhrah very highly. It is enclosed with a railing five feet high, and the Sheiks of the Mosque watch visitors and threaten them if they dare leap over the enclosure. At the cost of many curses, dire threatenings and much risk, I stood on this famous rock, associated with some of the greatest names and most important events in Jewish history. What soul could remain unmoved in such a place! Over that rough, rocky floor stood the first Temple erected on earth, for the worship of Jehovah; on it stood, in all probability, the Ark of the Covenant, and though now covered with dust, it has been baptized with the visible glory of God; and on that very stone, the feet of the High Priest have trodden, as he stood before the Mercy Seat and sprinkled the blood of atonement for his sins and the people's. But I thanked God that a better stone had been laid in Zion, elect and precious, even His own Son. Amid all changes, He is the same. Amid all revelations, and amid the ruin that shall overtake our planet, when the finger on the dial of time will point to the fulfilment of God's purposes, this Rock will be an eternal foundation of safety and strength. He is the Rock against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.

A short distance south is situated the Mosque El-Aksa, built by Justinian as a Christian Church, in the sixth century. Some of the columns supporting the arches are of great size. Here also are to be seen those double spiral columns, with capitals carved in the form of birds and beasts, mutilated by Mahomedan bigotry.

At the south end of the Mosque are two columns, the intervening space between which is called "the Gate of Paradise," through which every believer is anxious to squeeze. The pillars are worn considerably, showing that multitudes must

have passed through, even with violence. The pillars are far enough apart to allow the lean and dyspeptic to go through, but the stout, good-natured ones are utterly unable to pass, and if the legend be true, their hope of future bliss must be extinguished. The Governor of Jerusalem, however, has now placed an iron barrier between the pillars, which has annihilated the Mahomedan story, and at the same time lessened the income of the Sheikhs from this source, much to their disgust. Under El-Aksa are vaults, whose arched roofs are supported by piers composed of very ancient blocks of stone. Further south the roof is supported by monolith columns, with plain capitals, and the lower tiers of stone in the walls are over twenty feet long and four or five feet thick, and probably are in their original position, at the double gate through which in the first and second Temples, the people ascended from Ophel to the Temple area. At the south-east corner is the entrance to the vaults, called the "Stables of Solomon." Immense pillars support the arches. The cavern was used to stable the horses of the crusaders; the rings are yet seen to which the horses were fastened and the troughs from which they ate. The earth has fallen in at some parts, and after crawl-over mounds and through narrow passages, I could hear water trickling down towards the Kedron, and could see through, a small opening, daylight in the distance. The whole platform of the Mosque of Omar is over hollow ground, there are vaults and underground passages everywhere. This however is the spot, sacred by age, by its ancient glory and the presence of Jehovah, for when Greece was in heathenism, and before Rome was born or Britain known, the true God was worshipped on Moriah. Though the second Temple was inferior to the first, because it did not contain the Ark and the Shekinah, its glory was infinitely greater, for in its courts and walls God manifest in the flesh was seen, and almost under its very shadow died for the redemption of sinners.

A short distance east of the Damascus Gate is a small opening under the city walls. Our guide entered first; I squeezed through with some difficulty, accompanied by my friend Mr. Smart. Within was the blackness of darkness, save the light for a short distance round the opening through which we had just entered. This vast cavern stretched east and west and southward beneath the platform, on which the Mosque of Omar stands. We lit our candles and then began to crawl cautiously over heaps of fallen earth and broken stone. There seems little doubt this subterraneous cavern is the ancient quarry from which the stones were hewn for the Temple of Solomon. The ground was covered with small pieces chipped off by the masons' tools; in some parts immense blocks were lying in the rough as when they had been first separated from the rock long centuries ago, and traces of the massive chisel and wedge are clearly visible on the rock itself, and on many of the massivestones scattered on the ground. The roof is supported by huge piers of the native rock left standing at intervals. In many places small notches in the rock were cut for holding the lamps that gave light to the workmen; water trickled down into a trough, from which the builders of that glorious Temple of Jehovah may have drank, and which, doubtless, refreshed the thirst of thousands who fled to these dismal caverns from the Romans, the Crusaders and Moslems. The stone is almost white and is quite soft, but hardens when exposed to the air. In this very quarry, whose existence has been discovered only recently, stone was fitted to stone, and wrought with all the skill of those times, and the walls of the first Temple were reared so that there was neither hammer nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building.* One feels oppressed in that vast, silent quarry, and

* 1 Kings vi. 7.

in imagination, peoples it with busy workmen whose voices and hammer strokes once echoed through this gloomy place. The quarry is now still as a vast tomb, the cunning hands that hewed there are reduced centuries ago to dust, and the great Temple whose glory filled the people and king with joy has been razed, so that its foundations are scarcely to be found. Thus any one may see every day in Jerusalem, the literal and complete fulfilment of His words. As the great white stones reflected the sunlight, and the Temple stood out in all its splendour, the disciples with national pride referred to it. "Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here, Jesus answering said, there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." *

* Mark xiii. 1, 2.



CHAPTER XV.

BETHANY, BETHLEHEM, HEBRON, AND JERICHO.

“And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.”—*Matt.* xxvi. 30.



AMONG all the places famous in Bible story and dear to every Christian heart, none are more precious than Olivet, Gethsemane and Bethany. My repeated walks to Bethany, were sources of unspeakable pleasure, for they were over paths as old perhaps as the days of David, or of the patriarchs, and over one on which our blessed Lord must have walked. I looked with veneration almost on those deep valleys, and numerous rounded hills that stretched away down towards the plain of Jericho, and admired the beauty of fig, and almond, and olive tree, and the gorgeous hues of the flowers that decked with their inimitable loveliness the valleys and hillsides. In spite of the many terrible wars that have desolated Jerusalem, and reduced here palaces and temple to ashes, and her citizens to beggary, and made them outcasts among the nations, the general outlines of the Mount of Olives, and the deep valley of the Kedron and the Hinnom are unchanged, and I felt sure that on these and the surrounding country our Lord had often looked as He travelled to Bethany. Going out through St. Stephen's Gate I descended by a narrow footpath to the Kedron, which is spanned by a small stone bridge. The Kedron is a deep ravine, dry in summer, down which the winter torrents flow to

the Dead Sea. At the north-west of the city it is broad and shallow, opposite St. Stephen's Gate and down towards its union with the valley of Hinnom, it is a deep, narrow gorge. At the head of the valley of the Kedron are the tombs of the Judges, hewn out of the rock which rises a few feet above the general level. The entrance facing the west is ornamented with vine leaves and fruit. The main room is damp and musty. From this chamber doors lead into others on the south and east, in which are loculi in the walls, the length and size of a human body, and above them are arched recesses similar to those in the catacombs of Rome. A few minutes' walk down the valley, the tombs of the kings are reached. The rocks cut down about thirty feet, and an area is formed about one hundred feet square. On the west side of this court is a portico ornamented with bunches of grapes and wreaths of vine leaves. Crawling on hands and knees, I passed into a large chamber, around which a ledge extends elevated about two feet above the floor. From this chamber entrances lead to many smaller rooms, which were separated from each other by strong stone doors hung on stone hinges. A narrow groove is hewn in the centre of each loculus extending along its whole length. Was this for the sword or sceptre of the king? In some of them this groove is wanting, which may indicate they were the tombs of the queens or other members of the royal family. A heavy thick slab of stone forms the outer door of these tombs. It moves in slots cut in the rock, and can only be pushed to one side by the force of two or three men. Everything about these tombs indicates that they are very old. Their date, however, is unknown, and the origin of their present name. They are certainly the tombs of some powerful and wealthy personages. Many conjectures have been made in regard to them; may they not be the tombs of those kings who were not buried with the great and good kings in the City of David? Manasseh was buried in the garden

of his own house, and so was Amon, and Asa was buried in his own sepulchre which he had digged for himself in the city of David. Between the small bridge across the Kedron and Silwan are four noted tombs, the most northerly is that of Jehoshaphat. It is a subterranean tomb cut into the base of the mountain and has nothing worthy of special notice. The next tomb down the Kedron is the tomb of Absalom, a square mass of stone hewn out of the mountain, and surmounted by a dome tapering towards the top. The height is about forty feet, and the base of it is covered with heaps of small stones which the natives threw at it when passing, in contempt of the man guilty of rebellion against his father. Although there is a small opening and two loculi in this tomb, it has been supposed to be a memorial pillar and the real burial place to be that of Jehoshaphat in the rear of this monument. The tomb of St. James is immediately south; the entrance facing Jerusalem is ornamented with four Doric columns, and the tomb cave extends forty feet or more into the rock. Beyond this is the tomb of Zachariah, a solid block cut out of the mountain, and is about twenty feet square, surmounted by a pyramid also hewn from the rock. The height of the whole tomb is about thirty feet. Each side has two columns and two half columns, the capitals of which are Ionic. The side next Jerusalem is completely finished, while the others are not, which would, according to De Sauley, perhaps indicate that the work had been stopped by the fall of Jerusalem. It is a solid mass, with no interior chamber and none near it in the mountain. Like the tomb of Absalom, it is without inscription that would afford a clue to its date or purpose. Absalom was buried in a pit in the wood of Ephraim, "but in his lifetime he had reared up for himself a pillar which is in the king's dale."* The

* 2 Sam. xviii. 18.

reference in Genesis to the king's dale affords no clue to the locality. Josephus * calls it a pillar of marble in the king's dale and two furlongs distant from Jerusalem. The term pillar might apply to the monument in the Kedron called Absalom's tomb, and the marble of Josephus is simply the whitish limestone of which the hills are composed about Jerusalem. The distance, however, does not agree with the modern tomb. Perhaps the king's dale was the level area south of Ophel, formed by the junction of the valleys of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom. There is no doubt this part of the valley was cultivated in the days of the kings of Judah, and the distance would agree with the statement of Josephus as regards the distance from Jerusalem. The language of the Scriptures above quoted does not signify, a solid mass hewn out of the mountain, but a monument erected and set up, stone upon stone. On these tombs, however, the eyes of our Lord rested, as He looked down from Olivet into the Kedron and over on the doomed city, and this circumstance invests them with interest to every one who beholds them.

Let us hasten on to Bethany. Beyond the bridge that spans the Kedron valley opposite St. Stephen's gate are three roads: one, a narrow pathway leading directly over Olivet, past the Church of the Ascension; another, used by beasts of burden, sweeps southward along the base of the mount, and then extends in an easterly direction. Probably both of these roads are ancient, for pathways like everything else in the East have remained unchanged. And over the latter our Lord probably rode into Jerusalem previous to His crucifixion when the people took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Him, and cried, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." † There seems to have been no uncertainty

* Ant. vii. 10, 3. † John xii. 13.

as to the site of Bethany. The modern El Azariyeh occupies the site of the ancient village, nearly two miles from Jerusalem, and close to the old road from Jerusalem to Jericho, and thus agrees with the distance given by St. John: "about fifteen furlongs off." * It is situated on the south-east of a spur of the Mount of Olives, amid orchards of olive, almond, and fig trees. I saw it first from the spur on the north side, and it appeared very beautiful, nestling amid its gardens of almond trees in bloom. There was a subdued calm that seemed suitable for the spot so highly honoured by the presence of the Son of God, which was also in harmony with my own feelings. I stood at a distance and thought of the blessed home that once was there, whose inmates welcomed the Lord as He came to rest from His labours in Jerusalem with the proud Pharisee, and the hard masses sunk in ignorance and formalism. What divine condescension that He, who is the Creator of things visible and invisible, whose throne is high and lifted up, should thus accept the social kindness and shelter of that humble abode in Bethany! The modern village contains about thirty flat-roofed hovels, standing up conspicuously among which are the ruins of an ancient church or tomb. The site of the house of Lazarus is shown in the south-west, and his tomb on the south-east, to the latter of which I descended from the outside by twenty-six steps, which terminated in a small chamber, damp and filthy, and from which an opening led into a still smaller room, said to be the grave of Lazarus. The whole male population was collected on the tops of two or three houses which were joined together, a fire was blazing on the roof, some of the men were in earnest conversation, others praying, and all of them oblivious to our presence. Some of the most important scenes in the life of Christ were enacted here, and on the spur of Olivet behind the

* John xi. 18.

village. On the north-west of the village, close to the roadside, are old tombs cut in the limestone rock which rises to the surface. Some of them are also enclosed in adjoining fig gardens. There are no other tombs near the village for a long distance, and if the modern village be on the ancient site these tombs agree with the Scripture narrative, which implies they were outside the village when Martha met Christ. The descent to these old tombs is by five or six steps cut out of the rock; there are openings about five or six feet high and three broad, leading into the interior chamber hewn out of the solid rock. I saw no loculi in any which I visited. The dead bodies were probably placed on the floor of the chamber, and the door was closed by a stone slab placed against it. In one of these doubtless the omnipotent words of the Lord rang, and death was obedient to His command. "Lazarus came forth bound hand and foot with grave clothes."* The parting blessing of our Lord was given His disciples in all probability on the spur of Olivet north of Bethany, whence He ascended to heaven. St. Luke says: "He led them out as far as to Bethany;"† and in the Acts of the Apostles it is written, "they returned from the mount called Olivet."‡ Bethany is on a spur of Olivet, and, therefore, both passages are quite harmonious. If He had ascended from the site of the Church of the Ascension He would not have gone as far as to Bethany, but if from the spur of the mount overlooking Bethany, both facts are complied with: that He went as far as Bethany and yet was on the Mount of Olivet.

Near Bethany are gardens of fig and almond trees, enclosed by low stone walls. There is a famous passage in Mark xi. 13, which has caused difficulty to most readers and to many commentators. Our Lord was returning from Bethany, where He had spent the night, to Jerusalem, "and seeing a fig tree afar off

* John xi. 43. † Luke xxiv. 50. ‡ Acts i. 12.

having leaves, He came, if haply He might find anything thereon: and when He came to it He found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet." Various methods have been adopted to get rid of the impossibility of the Lord finding figs on the tree, and the seeming impropriety of cursing the tree, since it was not the time of figs. Some have proposed to make the last sentence interrogative, "for was it not the time of figs?" or by changing the negative adverb into an adverb of place, to read "for where he was, it was the time of figs." While others again propose to read, "for it was not the season for gathering the figs yet," and as there were leaves, which would indicate the presence of fruit in a healthy tree, and as the season for gathering the fruit had not arrived, it was natural for our Lord to expect figs on the tree. These changes are not entirely satisfactory. There are two crops of figs in Palestine, the early one gathered in the latter part of March and beginning of April. These are green and hard, and are eaten by the poor with salt, in many places of the country now. I ate them at Jericho and from the trees near Bethany, at the end of March and during the first week of April, about the same time of the year when our Lord expected fruit on the fig tree. This is the crop spoken of in the Song of Solomon. "The fig tree putteth forth her green figs" * (paggin). And at this same time the flowers are in bloom, and the birds are singing, and the grapes are forming on the vines. The main crop for use and exportation ripens in August and September. Now, as the figs are formed at the same time as the leaves or even prior to them, the tree ought to have had green figs. It is not to be supposed our Lord would expect an impossibility, and as He looked for fruit, we must honestly believe it was because He expected to find figs. There were leaves on

* Song of Sol. ii. 13.

the tree, and therefore there ought to have been fruit; it was the time of the green figs. The words, "the time of figs was not yet," were added in my opinion to indicate it was not the season of the summer crop, but it was the season of green figs, and so our Lord's action is justified and St. Mark's words accounted for.

The site of Bethphage is not certain; perhaps it may have been on the spur of Olivet north-east of Bethany, where a few ancient foundations have recently been dug up. It signifies "the house of the green figs," and may have been so called because the inhabitants made this an article of diet in spring, or that the fruit was gathered in quantities there for the market. In the passages of Scripture where the name occurs, it would seem to have been located east of Bethany. After our Lord restored sight to blind Bartimæus at Jericho, He and His disciples came up to Jerusalem. "And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, He sendeth forth two of His disciples." This would seem to indicate that He reached Bethphage first, and that it was therefore east of Bethany. A spur of the Mount of Olives projects some distance to the south-east of Bethany, and when one on coming up from Jericho passes this spur, Bethany appears some distance before him at the foot of the mount itself. If Bethphage were on this spur, Bethany would be over against one coming from the east. To this village, if it were situated on the north-east of modern Bethany, Christ may have sent his disciples for the colt on which He rode into the city, when the multitude in the wildest enthusiasm spread their garments in the way, and also branches of the fig and olive trees with which the mount was covered, and along that narrow road, that even to this day winds around the brow of Olivet, cried out, "Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." The site of Bethphage is lost as a matter

of certainty, but so is that of more famous places. Bethphage and Bethany remind us of the poverty of the people, and indirectly also of the fact that the mount which is now comparatively bare was then covered with trees. Bethany is to this day a house of poverty. There are no signs of business activity among the people. Visitors are naturally desirous of seeing, above all other places, the spot hallowed, while the world exists, by the presence of the King, of Him who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, and are admitted by an old wooden door into an enclosure, in which are the foundations of the traditional site of the home of Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus. There is nothing to support the tradition of the people. As, however, the village is in all probability on the site of ancient Bethany, one standing anywhere in the modern village is within a few yards at most from the site of the home in which the Son of God, the light and life and Creator of the world, found shelter and rest from the din of contending factions and the insults and scoffings of the godless in Jerusalem. However, for the privilege of seeing what one does not believe, a bukshish is paid by every visitor into the revenue of Bethany. A few families I found living, on the north side of the village, in what seemed to have been an old tomb hewn out of the mountain. There were no such luxuries as windows, and smoke was issuing from the entrance, which did duty for the door and window. In front of this entrance an enclosure about six or eight feet square was formed by a stone wall built up to the height of three feet; within this were a woman and a few children who were the picture of utter wretchedness, and vigorously demanded bukshish. Children followed us, even to the summit of Olivet. One young man gave me a handful of green almonds which he was eating and for which he expected a handsome gift; while an old leper thrust his leprous hand, swollen and twisted out of all resem-

blance to a human hand, into my face and in stern tones demanded a present of money for this favour.

As one stands on the top of Olivet, whose name will ever live in the heart and history of the Christian Church, and looks down the gently sloping hill to the Kedron and Gethsemane, and on to the City of God, he has before him within the distance of a few miles the scene of the mightiest deeds which were ever done on earth, which have moulded the history of the world, and which have given hope and moral strength and everlasting life to millions in their struggles with the stern realities of life and with sin and death.

There are three narrow foot-paths up the face of the Mount of Olives: one extending directly over the mount to Bethany; another diverges to the north from this a few yards above the garden of Gethsemane, and follows the depression between Scopus and Olivet; while a third diverges to the south, past the north-east corner of Gethsemane, and leads up to the tombs of the prophets, far up on the brow of a lower elevation, to the south of Olivet. Christ's triumphal entrance to Jerusalem, when the multitudes shouted, "Hosanna," was made along the road that extends below the Garden of Gethsemane, and, following the line of the Kedron for a short distance, sweeps eastward round the lower part of the mount. As he rode from Bethany along this way, Zion and Ophel would first appear, and then rounding a spur of the mount, the Temple and the whole city would burst on his view. And as he thought of its privileges and of its sin and its rapidly approaching doom, "when He was come near, He beheld the city and wept over it."

But some of those foot-paths must be as old as the time of our Lord, for the people of Bethany would take the shortest and most direct route over the mount to Jerusalem. Somewhere on the mount He sat and told His eager, questioning disciples of the coming doom of the city. At a point between

the Church of the Ascension and the tombs of the prophets, He would probably be opposite the Temple, and sufficiently retired from the roads of travel and the multitudes. There he had the whole city spread out like a panorama before him. The Kedron swept between him and the city, while just beyond it rose the city wall, within which was the Temple with its numerous courts and magnificent pillared corridors, and whose great stones were soon to be a heap of ruins. In its courts he could see the worshippers offering sacrifices, while their eyes were blind and their hearts hardened against Him who was the fulfilment of all sacrifices. In the Tyropœon and other narrow streets, he could see the people busy at their daily trade, and far over to the south-west he could behold Mount Zion the nucleus of the ancient city, and where the splendid palace of David and Solomon stood. Up this very Mount of Olives David the King, his illustrious ancestor, fled from the unnatural rebellion of his own son. But now David's Lord who shall yet have the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, is rejected and despised by his own, whom he came to save. On the same mount he forewarned his disciples of the gathering storms of divine wrath that would finally overthrow from its foundations the temple, the city, and the whole nation, and make the people despised and down-trodden among the Gentiles.

The Garden of Gethsemane is enclosed by stone walls, and occupies the angle between the direct foot-path, over the Mount of Olives, and the road used for beasts of burden which sweeps to the right after crossing the Kedron opposite St. Stephen's Gate. If these roads are as old as the days of our Lord, this spot would be too near the public highway to suit the Lord, who went to Gethsemane for retirement and rest from his toils and from human intercourse. It seemed to me, therefore, that the true scene of his bitter agony must be located

higher up the mount and probably in the direction of the tombs of the prophets. Though that part is now treeless, it was not so then, for the whole mount was covered with olive and fig trees. Objections have been taken to the narrative of Scripture in connection with the events of our Lord's last night in Gethsemane. Officers of the chief priest came to find him and make him prisoner. They had lanterns and torches as well as weapons. As it was the time of the full moon at the Jewish Passover, her silvery light in a cloudless sky, would have been better than the light of smoking torches or lanterns. And it has therefore been asserted that the occurrences are not true, or that John the author of the fourth Gospel, was not the Apostle, but a Christian of Asia or Egypt. There are two facts that the opponents of Scripture have not observed or have most unfairly kept in the background. The foliage of the olive trees is dense, the leaves are small and numerous on the branches. The space, therefore, covered by the spreading branches is quite dark. It was during the passover week I went to the Mount of Olives at night. The moon was shining brightly in the sky, which was studded with multitudes of brilliant stars, and while I could read a book in the moonlight, under the olive trees the darkness was so dense that a friend at a short distance could not see me. If we remember that there were not a few trees scattered here and there, but that the mount was covered with them, the necessity for torches and lanterns will appear. Besides those officers thought it probable that some of the disciples might flee for safety into the tombs that existed along the face of the mountain and along the valley of Hinnom. They probably thought that was a natural thing to do when danger threatened them. It was, doubtless, what they would have done in similar circumstances. They came prepared, therefore, for every emergency that might arise. And the whole narrative bears on its face

the stamp of golden truth, which will ever defy the ingenuity and wrongly directed efforts of men to destroy it, and also testifies that the author of the fourth Gospel is correct in the incidental details as well as in the leading facts of the occurrence in Gethsemane.

Before going north over many sacred places, let us take a glance at a few scenes south ; it can be done in a few moments, for we can travel faster along the pages of a book by our own fireside than on Syrian horses or on the swiftest donkey over the rough paths among the Judæan hills. I left Jerusalem in the early morning in company with the Rev. J. G. Smart. Our guide was Alexander, a member of the Greek Church, but who did not believe in all her superstitions by any means. He accompanied us to Damascus, and with a little more knowledge of Bible history will make a first-rate guide. The owner of the horses also came, a Mahommedan, whose fanaticism was of the fiercest. We started from near the Damascus Gate and rode in single file through Jerusalem, Alexander first, followed closely by myself and Mr. Smart, and in the rear the Mahommedan, who was gaily dressed in flashy gown and spotless turban, and mounted on a small donkey. The horses' hoofs clattered on the rough stones of the streets, and pressing close to the walls caused danger to our heads from projecting stones above, and to our legs from the walls below. Guiding our horses carefully through the motley crowd on Christian Street, shouting at one time to a stolid Russian peasant to get out of the way, or suddenly checking up our horses lest they might trample down women and children from many distant lands who ever and anon were crushed against us by the dense mass in front, we at length rode out through the Jaffa Gate ; and, turning to the left, hastened down the slopes of Mount Zion and crossed the Valley of Hinnom. Where we crossed, it was a deep gorge having Zion on the north, and the

hill of Evil Counsel on the south, honey-combed with ancient tombs, some of which are now occupied by wretched lepers. This was "the valley of the son of Hinnom," or "Tophet," in which Ahaz and Manasseh had placed Moloch, and caused their children "to pass through the fire," they were put to death amid the deepest agonies, as an act of worship to the heathen idol. Its worship led the Jews into a moral abyss, from which they could be rescued only by the hand of divine mercy. Jeremiah spoke of the doom of the people for their licentious and debasing idolatry in this valley. It had been long the receptacle of the offal, filth, and dead carcasses thrown out from the city. It was thus a place of defilement, and the Lord said : "Thus will I do unto this place and the inhabitants thereof, and even make this city as Tophet ; and the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah shall be defiled as the place of Tophet."* This penalty was inflicted in the days of the Babylonians and Roman sieges, during the latter of which the valleys about Jerusalem were piled high with the corpses of the Jews. In later times the valley became a symbol of the future place of punishment for the wicked, who shall be cast into the Gehenna, "into the fire that shall never be quenched."† Over a rough pathway we ascended the brow of the hill beyond, the sky was unclouded, the fields green and flowers decked the roadside. Flocks were feeding, pilgrims of every costume and language were hastening into Jerusalem to the Easter services. Along this way the patriarch Abraham probably travelled to the land of Moriah ; David passed over this road on his journeyings between Hebron and Jerusalem, and Solomon rode over it to his gardens in Wady Urtas, whose terraced slopes were then covered with fig trees, vines, and oranges. Over this road Joseph and Mary travelled

* Jeremiah xix. 12, 13. † Mark ix. 45.

when they came into the City of David which is called Bethlehem, to be taxed; and over it, doubtless, the blessed feet of Jesus walked. The whole journey was thrilling with interest, for the dust under our horses' hoofs had been trodden by the holiest and greatest of the world's heroes of the past. On the right, near Bethlehem, is the white, mosque-like tomb of Rachel. Of course it is modern, but may mark the last resting place of Jacob's wife. "As for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan, in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come to Ephrath; and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath: the same is Bethlehem."*

Soon Bethlehem came into view, like a queen among all the princesses of Judah. Her throne is the hill on which she sits in loveliness. The valley on the north sweeps away eastward towards the fertile plain whose fields Ruth gleaned, and over which the shepherds may have watched their flocks when the angel announced the good tidings of great joy. Terraces covered with vines, olive and fig trees rise up from the valley below, and form a garland of exquisite beauty to adorn the throne. Bethlehem has always been small, and never became important for its wealth or population. The references to it in Judges are not creditable to its morality. Near it, perhaps in the extensive plain eastward of the town, were the fields of Boaz in which Ruth gleaned, whose touching story opens to us the customs and inner life of the citizens of ancient Bethlehem. David, when the place was in the hands of the Philistines, longed for "the water of the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate."† On the north-west are three cisterns hewn out of the rock: this is the traditional well of David. The citizens draw up water from them by a rope and vessel attached. I do not know whether these cisterns are supplied by a spring

* Gen. xlviii. 7. † 2 Sam. xxiii. 15.

or not, but it is worthy of notice, the word used in Samuel for well does not signify a spring or fountain, but "pit," or something dug out, and the men who imperilled their life for David, "drew water out of the well," which describes the method of raising it out of a cistern. It was situated in or by the gate. The city seems to have been walled and to have had either one gate or one of special note. Moreover, it is probable the present road to Hebron is on the old route between it and Jerusalem, and the gate on that side of Bethlehem would be the one most frequently used by persons on this main road of travel. Hence, it might become the chief gate of the town. Besides, if a wall enclosed Bethlehem, it would extend along the brow of the hill on the north-west, east, and south-east, and therefore a well in the gate would be possible only on the north-west, east or south-east of the town. On the whole, therefore, it seems to me, after a careful visit, to be probable these cisterns may be on the spot whence the men drew up the water for David. Bethlehem is mentioned in connection with the return of Zerubabel and the captives from Babylon; but the chief interest of the world is centred in it as the birth-place of the Son of Man. It contains about six thousand inhabitants; its houses are of whitish grey limestone; the people are sturdy, industrious, and independent; the women are decidedly superior in appearance and intelligence to any in Palestine. I dismounted in the square before the Church of the Nativity, and entered a court through a low, iron-plated door, and thence passed into the Church, which is perhaps the oldest Christian Church in the world, being, according to some, the original Basilica of Constantine enlarged and repaired. The roof is supported by forty-four columns of different material, and with various kinds of capitals, some of which were not made for the columns on which they are now placed. Birds had come into the church from the gardens and were singing on the rafters

their sweetest song, as if in praise to Him who will not permit a sparrow to fall to the ground without His permission. Passing into the transept, which is separated by a wall from the nave on the right, I descended a few steps into the cave of the Nativity, covered by a marble slab, over which was a silver star, on which was written, "*Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est.*" Pilgrims were on their knees kissing the stone, and dipping their fingers into the oil in the golden lamps, which were burning above the cave, and smearing their faces with it, believing that it might cleanse their souls. A narrow passage through the rock leads to the chapel and tomb of Jerome, who, in the fourth century, did good service to the Church of Christ by translating the Scriptures into Latin. It is quite possible a cave may have been the birthplace of Christ, for the people may have occupied such rocky caverns as the people of Endor do now. Justin Martyr, about the middle of the second century, says our Lord was born "in a cave very close to the village," and it is scarcely possible this tradition would be astray in a century and a-half in regard to the most important event that ever occurred on earth. The magi, "when they came into the house, saw the young child with Mary His mother,"* but may a house not have been built at the mouth of the cave, as some of those yet to be seen at other places. Thus the magi could have entered the house, and yet Justin's tradition be true, for the house would be partly composed of mason-work at the entrance to the cave. Or may not the child and His mother have been removed from the cave to some house of a friend before the magi reached Bethlehem. However, in every foot of Bethlehem one feels very near the cradle of the Lord, who has brought peace on earth and good-

* Matt. ii. 2.

will toward men, who has cheered millions in the struggle of life, and saves us from sin. The memory of famous deeds and mighty men, from David, who fed his father's flocks in the wadies and wild hills, to Christ the Lord of glory, who have made Bethlehem precious to the Christian and the scene of events of eternal importance to the world made me linger longer in its streets.

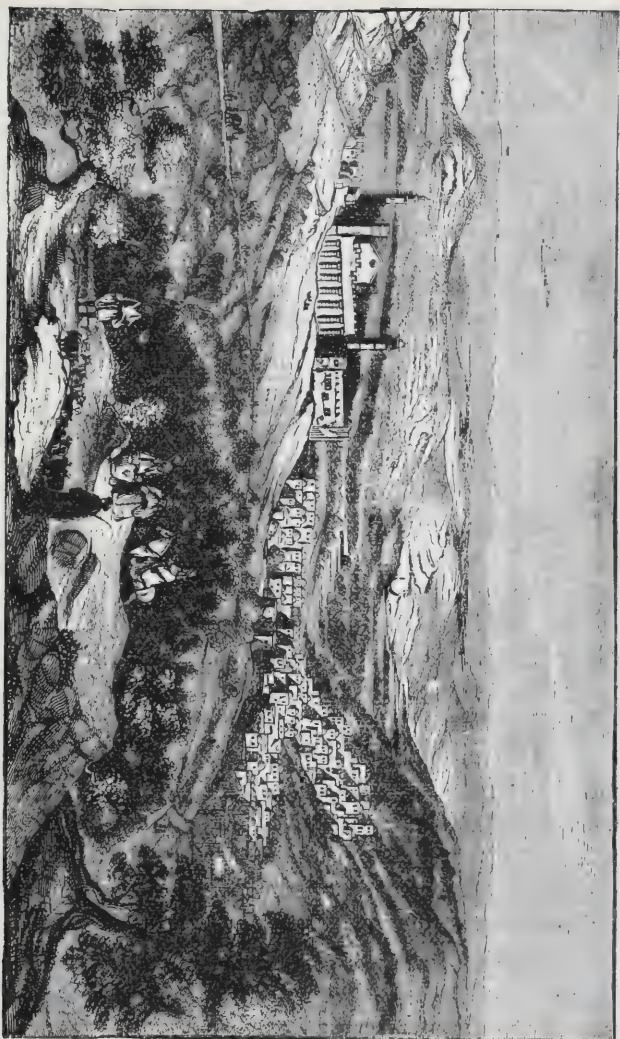
We lunched at the Pools of Solomon. The largest of the three is five hundred and eighty-two feet long, the second four hundred and twenty-three feet, the third three hundred and eighty feet, and are constructed partly of masonry, and partly hewn out of the solid rock. They follow the direction of the valley, and the one lowest down receives the overflow of the others above it. A quadrangle and tower near the pools were occupied by a few murderous-looking soldiers. From these pools water is conveyed by an aqueduct along the brow of the hills to Wady Urtas, and thence to Jerusalem. These pools are lined with a thick coating of cement, like the upper and lower Gihon. They are of great age, and there seems no reason why they should not be the work of Solomon, whose name they bear. Soon we were crossing the hills by rough paths, and then descended into rich valleys, covered with the deepest green. Here and there men were ploughing with their primitive ploughs drawn by oxen. As it was near the Feast of Moses, Mahommedans gaily dressed rode past us in companies headed by a dignitary riding a white horse and carrying in his hand a long spear-headed staff of office. They were a fanatical lot, and hardly responded to our salutations. Towards sun-down we turned from the main road to the right, and rode down narrow roads eight or ten feet wide, with high walls on each side, enclosing gardens of vines and figs. These were the roughest and most dangerous roads I had yet travelled in Palestine. As the road extended down a natural

depression, the streamlets caused by the spring rains flowed into it, so that in some places the water reached the feet of the rider. The bottom was full of loose stones, the water was dirty, and occasionally my horse placing its foot on a smooth stone, which just appeared above the surface of the water would slip, and as its foot went down violently the rider was drenched with muddy water, or lurched against a thorny hedge or thrown into the gully. The garden walls in Palestine are usually from two to six feet high, composed of stones without mortar, and along the top runs a row of thorns, all which indicates that the eighth commandment is violated in Palestine as well as in Canada. These jedars, the Hebrew for which is "gadair," or "geder," are about six or eight feet high at Hebron, narrower at the top than at the base, and the rough unmortared stones can easily be thrown down by an enemy or robber. The small holes between the stones are the abodes of serpents, and the truth that an evil deed will only be rewarded with evil is taught in Scripture, by a reference to these walls: "Whoso breaketh down a jedar a serpent shall bite him."* And the vengeance of God in the utter ruin of men who plot against those whose strength is Jehovah, is forcibly pointed out, by comparing them to these loosely built, unmortared walls. "How long will ye imagine mischief against a man? Ye shall be slain all of you: as a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering jedar."† After an hour's floundering and plunging in these narrow ways full of water and rough stones, which in Palestine are called roads, but in Canada would be called a combined quarry and river, we reached the Russian Hospice. It is a large stone building, situated on the brow of the hill overlooking the Valley of Eschol. The lower part of the Hospice was occupied by scores of Russians, who were busy in preparing

* Ecc. x. 8. † Ps. lxii. 3.

their evening meal. The men were moving in every direction with vessels of hot water to prepare tea, while the women were spreading out quilts and rugs on the floor, for a shake-down for the night. Others were seated on the outside of the building in groups, eagerly discussing topics of common interest. Our horses were provided for, and we were shown to the upper part of the building which we were to occupy for the night. Alexander spread out our food on a large table, while the Russian matron furnished us with hot water and necessary vessels. The room was large, airy and clean. The only furniture in it being the table and a few rough common chairs. As we were hungry we enjoyed our evening meal, our cups being refilled until either the hot water supply became exhausted or Alexander's patience, for on returning my cup for more he replied with a merry twinkle of his black eyes, "Khalas," it is finished. In a room adjoining were two beds, on which we piled up our rugs and spare coats, for the night air was raw and chilly, and slept soundly under the shadow of Hebron.

In the early morning I looked out on that rich plain stretching away in a south-easterly direction. Here probably grew the large bunches of grapes in the Valley of Eschol, one of which the spies took with them as a sample of the fertility of the soil. Five minutes ride down the valley from the hospice is an old oak; it is twenty-six feet in girth at its base, and a few feet from the ground divides into four immense branches, which spread out to a considerable distance, and afford a pleasant shade, and though having no connection with Abraham, may well be a lineal descendant of that one in the plains of Mamre, beneath which he entertained the angels. A half hour's ride down the valley over an old Roman road brought us to Hebron, built on the north-eastern slope of the valley. On both sides of this road were old wells, out of which David may have



HEBRON.

drank. Here, in one of the vineyards, a man was ploughing with an ox and an ass. The ox was determined to draw the plough in one direction and the ass in another, the farmer was indifferent, for a straight furrow seemed of no account; if the plough put into the field at one side will come out at any spot in the same field at the other side he is satisfied. I watched the result and found that the superior strength of the ox overcame the stubbornness of the ass. When one sees these two unequal animals yoked together, the mercy of the Mosaic code to the weaker animal, and its necessity, become apparent: "Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together."* Good ploughing and straight furrows are important in Canadian farming; in the East however they are of no account. The furrows there are as crooked as the streets of Damascus, to travel through which one must imagine himself a corkscrew, and twist and turn himself in one direction, and he will arrive at some *cul de sac*, or against some stone wall that will hinder further progress. Then in order to return, he needs to untwist himself and turn himself in the opposite direction and he will arrive at some other place which he did not expect to reach. Farming like every other industry, except the art of extracting gold from travellers, is in a primitive condition in the East. Perfection in this art of bukshish, however, is not confined to the natives of the East, for Europeans are adepts in this branch of business, but work in more indirect but very successful methods.

The Evangelists are correct, even to the minutest details, in their references to the customs and occupations of the people in this old land. This is seen in their incidental statement about the ploughs in their day. Our Lord, when urging the necessity of persevering in the one work of following Him, enforces His truth by a reference to the ploughman, who ever keeps his eyes

* Deut. xxii. 10.

and mind on the work before him, says: "No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God."* If the plural "hands" had been written, instead of hand, it would have indicated the ignorance of the writer, and placed a weapon in the hand of the unbeliever wherewith to assail the truth. But here, as elsewhere, the Evangelists prove themselves to have been men of the country by their correct statements of details. I rode through the Jewish quarter of Hebron under arches, and through dark and filthy lanes to the Mosque, under which is the cave of Machpelah, the burial place of the great patriarchs. On the north side of the Mosque is an area, in the centre of which is an old well, curbed with large stones, and called Abraham's Well. On the south-east are steps leading up to the Mosque. An armed Mahommedan warned me not to ascend more than five steps; I went one more and stood upon the sixth, and thrust my arm into a hole and so got as near as possible to the resting place of the illustrious dead. The Mahommedans are very fanatical in Hebron, and guard the Mosque with jealous care. A number of boys were sitting on the steps below me, committing the Koran to memory. As I passed them I stooped to see their little books, and to show their hatred of the infidel they at once closed them, rose *en masse* on their feet and hissed like serpents at me. I visited a glass manufactory, the only one I believe in Palestine. The chief article produced is glass bracelets of various colours, for ladies' arms. Hebron has its Jewish quarter where the descendants of Abraham spend their life in perpetual danger from the fanaticism of their Mahommedan fellow citizens. They make a precarious living by mending boots and old clothes, as they do the world over. In the valley to the south of the city is a large pool, one hundred and thirty feet square, and fifty feet

* Luke ix. 62.

deep. A few minutes' ride northward is a lesser pool. The water in the former is clear, and used by the people of Hebron, in the other it is stagnant, and a thick green scum had collected on the surface. These are like Hebron, very old, and at one of them David may have hanged the murderers of Ishbosheth, as told in second Samuel ii. 12. Hebron rivals the most ancient cities of Syria or Egypt; it was built seven years before Zoar in Egypt, and before Abraham's time was known as Kirjath-Arba, and is now called El-Khulil, "the friend," in reference to Abraham the friend of God. The position of the large pools in the valley, and the springs contiguous to Hebron, would indicate that the modern city is on the site of ancient Hebron. Early in the afternoon I mounted my horse and rode round the outskirts of the city once the heritage of Caleb, where David reigned seven years, and which was one of the cities of refuge. In Hebron have lived men famous in the early history of the Hebrews; its name and locality are full of unwearying interest. May the day soon come when Britain shall rule the land; then iron clamps will be broken, marble slabs will be lifted up, iron doors will be swung open on their old, rusty hinges, and the cave of Machpelah will tell its now hidden story and reveal its mystery, and men may even look on the embalmed patriarch who was carried up out of Egypt and buried there! Amid the curses of fanatical Mahomedans, and the friendly curiosity of the Jews, I turned my horse's head and rode out of Hebron forever, over ground, trodden by ancient patriarchs, and angels, and famous kings.

The sun was setting and throwing a mantle of purple and gold over the Church of the Nativity and the white houses of Bethlehem as I galloped on horseback over the plains eastward, on which the shepherds watched their flocks, when the angels sang the heavenly birth-song of the Lord. Down deep wadies

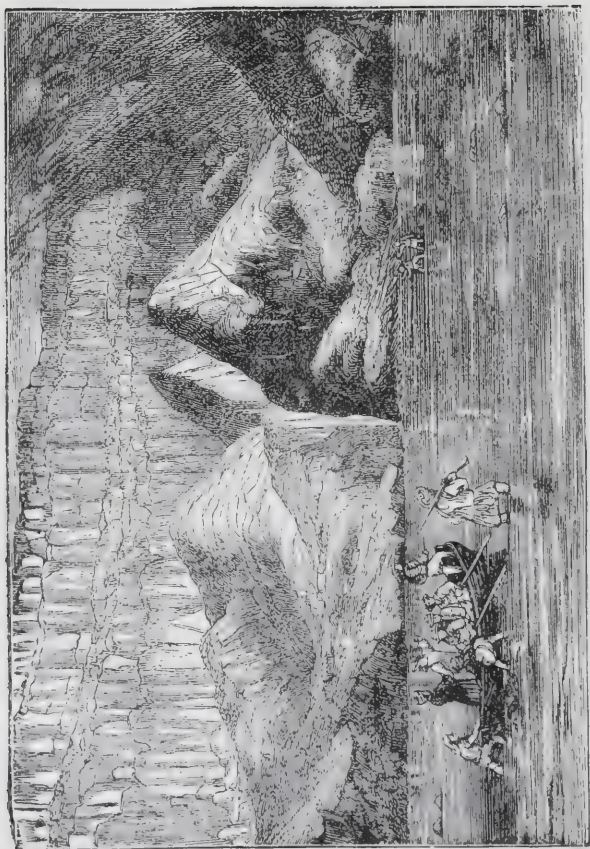
we rode, along narrow paths, and on the crest of lofty mountains overlooking deep chasms below. One needs to hold a tight rein and keep a watchful eye riding over these dangerous roads, for a slip or stumble would easily hurl horse and rider into the terrible rocky gorges hundreds of feet below. At eight o'clock in the evening we reached Mar Saba, and after much shouting and parleying, the large gate swung on its rusty, creaking hinges and we rode down the steep causeway into the courts below, and soon were guided up a stairway to the room where we were to spend the night. The room was large, with a rough table in its centre, a closet for dishes in one end, and a low divan extended round three sides. After a scanty meal I stood at the door and looked over this weird spot. High above on the face of the rock were cells of the monks from which a feeble light flickered, and on the other side of the deep Kedron were other cells now unoccupied except by wild beasts. Everything was as silent as the grave, except a low sound from the cells high above me in which the monks were praying. The silvery moonlight brought out into prominence the towers of the convent and the tops of the halls, while the darkness of the lower part of the wild Kedron below rendered the scene more impressive and terrible. The rock tomb of the founder and his confined couch were visited next morning, also the depository of numberless skulls and bones of the monks, but as I was not studying physiology or worshipping martyrs' relics, I did not prolong my stay in those gloomy abodes. The church is beautifully adorned, and the library has a few valuable manuscripts, which the monks prize highly though ignorant of their contents. The monks in their long gowns, loose slippers and high black hats, knit, sew, cut sticks, and tame pigeons, and in general vegetate in an aimless way until death comes, when their bones will be mingled in confusion in the general heap.

At Mar Saba, two men joined us in our journey to the Dead Sea. The one was a farmer from the Western States, over six feet high, and a shrewd observer of things and men; the other was the gentleman who had travelled with us from Joppa across to Jerusalem. Alexander had placed two bottles of water on the floor of the large dining and sleeping-room of the convent. The one contained drinking water, the other I had filled with water at Bethlehem and sealed. One small candle cast a dim light through the large room, so that with difficulty could we recognize one another at the distance of fifteen or twenty feet. After supper we rested on the divan that extended along the walls of three sides of the room, and in the lurid glare of the candle light, talked over the matters of the day and the scenes through which we had passed. And though full of eager speculation for the morrow, when we would visit the famous plain of Jericho, the witness of such marvellous scenes and mighty men of God, we thought of our loved ones and friends at home in Canada and the United States. Meanwhile, our western man had begun a tour of inspection in the room, and was prowling into strange corners and dark nooks. During this tour he managed to stumble against the two bottles of water and broke one into pieces. My heart sank as I saw the water streaming over the floor, I rose hurriedly, and to my joy found the surviving bottle was the sealed one from Bethlehem. The grief of the western man was intense, because he thought the liquid was wine, and regarded it as a calamity that there should have been so much waste. He felt therefore relieved when he discovered it was only spilt water and not wine. But glass bottles are of considerable value at Mar Saba, and so is water, for after considerable bantering with Alexander, he paid down a handsome price for the damage he had done, and learned the lesson of watching his feet when searching out-of-the-way places in convents.

A small closet at one end of the room was occupied as a sleeping place by our new comer, who carried with him sheets, pillow-cases and other articles that added to his comfort by night, but to his discomfort by day. For, almost daily, some article was forgotten or lost, until finally the whole stock was gone, much to our peace, and on the whole to his advantage.

Early in the morning we were ready to mount on horses and start before the heat of the day, but our friend in the closet was still asleep. A messenger was sent in to inform him if he did not make his appearance in fifteen minutes we would leave him. We paced the court yard of Mar Saba, and when the time had elapsed, as he did not put in an appearance, we mounted our horses and rode away, leaving him to bring up the rear with a friend. At first we rode along a narrow path high up on the brow of a hill, and overlooking the deep gorge of the Kedron. In an hour we turned in a north-easterly direction. Our route lay over barren plains and desolate hills. Here and there a few graves were passed that added, if possible, to the dreariness of the scene. At length our route was in an easterly direction, and we began to descend towards the plain of Jericho. The whole country was desolate in the extreme, and scarcely a sign of vegetation appeared. Down, down we rode over dangerous paths and among barren hills that rose up on every side of us, and in every possible slope. At length that strange Dead Sea appeared like a deep basin, hemmed in by the mountains of Moab on the east side, that stood out in sharp outline and rugged grandeur against the sky, and by these, down whose brows and deep chasms we were riding.

The clear water of the sea sparkled in the sunlight, and far away beyond the plain I could trace the course of the Jordan by the shrubs and trees that lined its banks; and its muddy-coloured water could be followed for a considerable distance



SCENE ON THE DEAD SEA.

from the shore at the head of the sea, until it finally mingled itself with the bitter water. The strip of vegetation followed the Jordan to the shore of the sea, and then death held its sway. Neither shrub nor flower grows along the desolate shores of the sea, and its waters also are destitute of organic life. It is the scene of silence and death. As I wished to reach the sea as soon as possible, and ride northward along its shore, I had to force the muleteer out of his usual route. There is nothing more distasteful to our oriental than to infringe on custom; it seems little short of sacrilege. The muleteer first persuaded, then lied, and did everything to carry his point. He said, with fire flashing in his eye, and in an angry tone, "Princes have come here and mighty men before thee, and they had gone in this way." I replied, I did not care for princes or mighty ones. Then he tried to terrify me: "Howadjah, thou wilt be killed in the holes." In reply I turned my horse's head and galloped straight for the sea along with my companions. The Mahommedan muleteer followed, muttering curses on me. But as Alexander willed it and we were already galloping away, he submitted and followed us. It is a strange sea, thirteen hundred and twenty feet below the level of the ocean, and in its centre more than thirteen hundred feet deep. Though it receives the waters of the Jordan and Arnon and other streams it has no visible outlet. Its water is clear as crystal, and contains bromine, potassium, and other minerals, and about twenty-eight per cent. of salt. The density of the water therefore is great, and feels waxy to the touch. No organic life is visible in its water, and I only saw one bird fly over its surface. Across the sea the Moabite mountains rose up barren and bleak, and riven with deep chasms to their very base. Pisgah, on which Moses died, is the highest peak of Nebo, which is itself merely a spur of the Abarim range of mountains, that rise up in wild and rugged grandeur, thousands of feet above

the wadies below. The statements of Scripture afford ample data to locate this mountain. "Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho."* In addition we are informed where the plains of Moab were situated. When the children of Israel defeated the Midianites, they brought the captives and the spoil "to Moses, unto the camp at the plains of Moab, which are by Jordan near Jericho."† From this mountain the old and faithful leader who had guided the fickle, thankless host forty years through the terrible wilderness, could see the whole country from Zoar on the south to Dan at the very source of the Jordan. Beyond the Jordan he could behold far northward, the mountains of Naphtali that bound the plain of Huleh, and also the mountains and valleys of Samaria, and all the land of Judah to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Standing at the northern shore of the Dead Sea, the highest peak almost due east is Pisgah. It is known as Jebel Nebi, "the mountain of the Prophet." The wady that extends from the Jordan along the northern base of this lofty mountain is called Wady Musa by the Arabs. This mountain near which are the springs of Ain Musa, complies in every respect with the requirements of the biblical narrative. It is before the face of Jericho and by the Jordan, and from its summit the plain of Jericho, and the whole of south-western Palestine is distinctly seen in the marvellously clear atmosphere of the Orient. The early tribes on the east of the Jordan were Semitic. They descended from the same stock and spoke a language identically the same as the Hebrews. They were descendants of Moab the grandson of Lot, and occupied the highlands and fertile valleys on the east of the Dead Sea. They became isolated from the descendants of Abraham, and

* Deut. xxxiv. 1. † Num. xxxi. 12.

fell into the state of heathenism in which they were found when the Israelites came out of the desert and sought a passage through their territory. In the Babylonian pantheon, Nebo was a prominent deity, who seems to have presided over literature, and was the equivalent of the Egyptian Thoth, and the Greek Hermes. His name given to a mountain range, also to a town of the Moabites, indicates that the form of idolatry existing in the country near the Euphrates, from which their ancestors had emigrated, prevailed among them. The ruins of altars are yet to be seen on the hill tops in this wild region, on which sacrifices were offered to Nebo, Chemosh, and Baal-Peor; and Moses was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-Peor, probably a temple dedicated to Baal-Peor.

At Dibon, the capital, the famous Moabite stone was found in 1868, which is now in the Louvre in Paris. It contains thirty-four lines, and though mutilated, affords important testimony to the veracity of biblical history. After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled, and the kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom, united their forces against him. In his despair, he "took his eldest son and offered him a burnt offering upon the wall." * The tablet informs us that Mesha was king of Moab, and Dibon the capital, that the Moabites were subject to the house of Omri the father of Ahab, and that he went out to battle against Israel, and at length finding that he was in danger, sacrificed his eldest son at Kerak. Though the stone does not add anything of importance to the stock of our knowledge of those times, it is of value as testifying so far to the facts of Scripture. It is worth noticing that some of the characters on the Moabite stone, are the same as many used in the Sinaitic inscriptions in Wady Mukatteb, in Arabic, which may help to

* 2 Kings iii., 27.

determine the date of those inscriptions ; for if they were of very late origin, these primitive forms of the Hebrew characters would not have been employed. Besides, in looking over this stone, one is struck with the truth that the Greek alphabet must have been imported from the Orient, and some of the characters have existed unchanged in form from the time of their adoption into Greece to the present. The stone points to the identity of the Moabites and Israelites, and also shows that the foundations of the Indo-European languages as well as mythology and architecture were imported from the Semitic race : through this race Jehovah has given the moral law and a divine revelation of Himself ; and through it also the Word was made flesh, " the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Between Wady Zerka and the River Arnon, a mountain peak towers some thousands of feet above the Dead Sea, and on its summit, Alexander, the son of Hyrcanus I., built the impregnable fortress of Machaerus, in which John the Baptist was beheaded. Fearless of danger, and no respecter of persons, he denounced Herod who had forsaken his wife, the daughter of Aretas, and was living with Herodias his brother Philip's wife. In the light of the law of God, he told Herod " it is not lawful for thee to have her." Herod then adopted the method of tyrants to silence the truth and crush out righteousness ; " he bound John and put him in prison." From the lower city, which was enclosed by strong walls and towers, an underground path led us to the fortress on the top. The foundations of the wall are yet visible, and cisterns hewn out of the rock to contain a supply of water in case of siege, and also vaulted dungeons in one of which the faithful servant of Christ was beheaded. From that dreary place among the wild mountains of Moab, isolated from friends, and doubtless suffering from heartless cruelty, John sent his disciples to

Christ, saying: "Art thou He that should come or look we for another?" Josephus says, "Machaerus was ditched around with such valleys on all sides and to such a depth that the eye cannot reach their bottoms," and that "Herod built a wall round the top of the hill, and erected towers at the corners, of a hundred and sixty cubits high."* If the chained forerunner of Christ were allowed to look out from his prison across the Dead Sea, towards the plains of Jericho the scene of his labours, and towards Bethlehem and Jerusalem, he must have fretted like a captive eagle, and wondered why the mighty Son of God did not free him, that he might work longer as a preparer of the way of the Lord. But his work was done, his days of imprisonment in the terrible dungeon of Machaerus were days of personal preparation and waiting. And, though the Lord wrought no miracle to deliver him, doubtless His answer to the message of John gave him strength and peace in submitting to the will of God.

Along the sea shore where over masses of bituminous rock and scrubby bushes. There were many ravines and pits along the route, into which our Mahommedan would have rejoiced to see us fall. Along the beach were scattered pieces of dead wood encrusted with saline matter, and not a sign of vegetable life was visible as far as the eye could reach. I have read in books in my youth, that no living creature could fly across that sea, that the noxious vapours would kill it. During my stay, I saw only one bird flying across the north-west corner of the sea, but of course it lived. We prepared to bathe in that strange sea; rough pebbles and black stones lined the beach over which we walked as lightly as possible, putting one foot down gently, and cautiously feeling for a soft place for the other, and meantime swinging out our arms like wind-

* Bel. Jud., vii. 6, 2.

mills in our effort to keep our balance ; we were soon lifted from our feet in deep water. The chief difficulty is to remain in the water, for the swimmer finds himself on the surface and has to force arms and limbs beneath in order to propel himself.

It is of the first importance to keep one's head above water, for if any of it gets into eyes or ears, or nostrils, the sensation is like that of a red-hot coal. One gentleman ventured in with great trepidation. He said he could not swim ; we gave him encouragement by telling him it was impossible to drown. He was over six feet high and of considerable lateral dimensions. He crawled out timidly, but gained confidence when he found he did not sink like a stone, as he evidently expected. While we were swimming about, suddenly there was a splurging and splashing as if a whale were floundering in the sea behind us. Our friend had managed to get his head into the sea, and his feet out of it, and was frantically lashing the water with his hands in order to recover his right perpendicular. On reaching the shore he applied a towel to his eyes, ears and nostrils, which were smarting as if the fire of perdition had got into them, and meanwhile was sadly lamenting that a man from the prairies of the great Western States, and who had been born under the Stars and Stripes, should have been such a fool as to have bathed in such a sea.

We mounted and galloped on horseback over the plain of Jericho, and in an hour reached the traditional site of the passage of the Israelites over the Jordan. The river is about one hundred feet broad here ; the current is swift, and the water muddy. On the east side, the banks were over twenty feet high, and the mountains of Moab rose up range above range and in a multitude of barren peaks. On the west side, where we landed, the ground gradually shelved down towards the river, and the flats which are overflowed at the time of harvest to this day were covered with Tarfa and other shrubs and

FORDING THE JORDAN



trees. The Israelites entered the land of Canaan, we read, opposite Jericho. It was at the harvest time, when "Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest." * At the end of March when I was there, the Jordan was overflowing its shelving banks on the west side. The current was strong, and only a powerful and expert swimmer could cross, so that the multitudes of men, women, children and animals could not cross at the harvest season. The Jordan maintains its overflow all the time of harvest, as Dr. Thomson shows, for its supplies come from the fountains at Tel-el-Kady, and Banias, which are greatly increased by the melting snows on Hermon and the Lebanon. Thus a steady volume of water is maintained for months, and the literal truth of Joshua's words may be seen now by every one who visits the country. As we had remained in the Dead Sea, we were tormented with a burning sensation, as if we had been clad in the poisoned garment of Hercules. In order to cool ourselves as well as for the mere sentiment of bathing in the Jordan, we were soon luxuriating in the pleasures of a bath in the sacred river of Palestine. As the current was powerful we never went beyond our depth, and always kept the clay bottom within reach of our feet. After this part of our work was finished I filled some flasks with water, and cut a few sticks from the trees on the banks of the river as memorials of my visit to the Jordan. The two gentlemen who had joined us at Mar Saba had diminished our stock of provisions. An extra supply had been sent from Jerusalem for them, and had been brought to Mar Saba by another guide who had informed our man, Alexander, that it was outside the convent walls. Alexander, it seems, demanded him to bring it inside the convent. He refused. Alexander stood on his dignity and would not go out for it. The issue

* Joshua iii. 15.

of the matter was our loss, for the other guide wisely carried it away, and when we understood the facts of the case, we demanded that Alexander should find the other guide and bring the food. After a ride of three or four miles along the plain of Jericho, he found the guide, but our food meanwhile had been eaten. Our stock was nearly exhausted, so we were anything but complimentary to Alexander. He replied, "I did according to custom I would never be his servant," referring to the other guide. However, we had to go on short rations for the sake of maintaining Alexander's dignity and oriental customs. Meantime, an American who had been with the guide who carried off our provisions put in an appearance to explain matters. A large branch of a fallen tree extended from the bank of the Jordan for eight or ten feet into the bed of the river. He walked out cautiously on this branch and stooped to fill a zinc vessel with water, and all the time, in strong language, defending the action of his guide in taking our provisions, and his own action in eating his share of them. In his excitement he had leaned too far over; the branch gave a sudden lurch and over he rolled headforemost into five or six feet of water. He rose from his involuntary bath thoroughly drenched with muddy water and his zeal for his dragoman completely washed out.

We rode across the plain towards Jericho, about five miles to Tell Jiljal, the site of ancient Gilgal. At this place is an old well, Birket Jiljulieh, and some traces of the spot having been occupied. This spot, only recently discovered, is in all probability the site of the first encampment of the Israelites in Palestine, and agrees with the statement of Scripture, "The people came up out of Jordan and encamped in Gilgal in the east border of Jericho."* Here the children of Israel set up

* Joshua iv. 19.

the twelve stones which they had taken out of Jōrdan. Here, too, the males born in the desert were circumcised, the Passover celebrated for the first time in the land of Canaan, and there the manna ceased after they had eaten of the old corn of the land. From Gilgal they started on their march towards Jericho, and thence to Ai, and onward to the final subjugation of the whole land. Though now uncultivated and covered with low scrubby bushes, it is a spot of surpassing interest. Here the Israelites realized for the first time that the promise made to their great ancestor centuries before was fulfilled, and, as the ransomed ones from Egyptian slavery, they could celebrate with joy the first Passover in the land of their freedom, which was only a feeble type of the spiritual deliverance which Christ was to bring by His death, in that same land, for the whole world.

Er-Riha, modern Jericho, consists of fifteen or twenty huts composed of mud, rough stones, with an occasional piece of marble or ancient column inserted. The houses are enclosed by a hedge of thorns, and the citizens are a villainous-looking lot, who might well be the descendants of the thieves among whom the Samaritan fell in his journey from Jerusalem to Jericho. Our night was spent in the house of a Greek. It was one-storied, and contained four small rooms, with some sheds in the rear. The gardens were well watered, and vegetation very abundant. Lemon and other trees were laden with fruit so that the boughs had to be supported by wooden props. I plucked a large lemon from one of the trees which helped to quench my thirst for two days on the sultry plain of Jericho. The soil and climate are well suited for lemon trees, which bear abundant crops. The riding and excitement of the day gave us a splendid appetite, so that we were not particular as to the quality or taste of our worthy host's provisions. He did his best to serve us and maintain his own

reputation as a liberal man. Our friend who had his head immersed in the Dead Sea, seemed to imagine he was west, in the land of corn and buckwheat. He asked the Greek if he could give him any buckwheat cakes. He thought for an instant, and replied, "No butweet cake in Er-Riha, howadjah."

Next morning under a heavy rain storm we rode in a north-easterly direction to Ain-es-Sultan ("The Fountain of Elisha") at the base of a mound of ruins, rising about a hundred feet above the plain. This spring, whose clear waters flow over the plain, was that which the prophet healed. It was slightly tepid and brackish to the taste. Its banks were lined with shrubs and trees growing with tropical luxuriance. The mound marks, probably, the site of ancient Jericho, in the days of Joshua. I rode round it and climbed over it. Far down into the chasms, dug by wandering Arabs and the inhabitants of the modern village seeking for treasure, I could see broken pottery, pieces of hewn stone, and broken columns, which may have belonged to the palace of the king or the houses of the great men in that old city overthrown by the power of God, after the priests had encompassed it seven days. The ancient city must have included a much larger area than that which this mound occupies, otherwise it would be impossible to account for the necessity of the miraculous aid of God in taking it. For if it were as limited as this mound, the Israelites could in a very short time have starved the people and thus forced them to capitulate even though the walls were strong and high. It is probable, therefore, the city was of considerable size, and extended west in the direction of the hills, for the plain is covered with small mounds and traces of ancient substructures, the foundations of houses or of the city walls.

About a mile and a-half, south-west are ruined walls, aqueducts and traces of old foundations which, probably, mark the site of the Jericho which Herod the Great beautified and forti-

fied, which Archelaus restored, and who also planted the plain with palms, and irrigated them by means of the aqueducts yet visible in ruins over the plain. From this city, a Roman road can yet be traced, over which Herod doubtless passed in heathen splendour, and over which our Lord travelled, and by the side of which Bartimæus may have sat and begged. West of Jericho, the barren hills rise perpendicularly from the plain; thither the spies fled, and there tradition says is the scene of our Lord's temptation. As He looked down on Jericho in its glory, and over the fertile plain stretching to the Jordan and the Dead Sea, and beheld the splendour of the city upon which Herod had lavished gold and silver, He would have a specimen of the wealthy cities of the Gentile kingdoms. There is no reason to believe that Satan had power to present in one grand panorama before Christ "The kingdoms of the world." As the Son of God, Christ knew their glory, and moreover, that they were His by creation and the will of the Father, who gave Him "the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession." Satan showed Christ this famous city, whose king was steeped in luxury and vice, and who possessed immense wealth, as Josephus states, and promised Him not only the city and kingdom of Herod, but "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them." He defeated His foe, and came out of the temptation better qualified to succour them that are tempted, and remained a merciful and faithful High Priest. Had Christ wavered or fallen for a moment even, not earth only, but heaven and God would have been ruined.

"Money brings honour, friends, conquest and realms :
What raised Antipater the Edomite,
And his son Herod placed on Judah's throne,
Thy throne, but gold? that got him puissant friends.
Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand ;
They whom I favour, thrive in wealth amain,
While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want."

To whom thus Jesus patiently replied :
“Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
For Empire’s sake, nor Empire to affect
For glory’s sake.
For what is glory but the blaze of fame ?
Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek,
Oft not deserved ? I seek not mine, but His
Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am.” *

There are no palms at Jericho now, but the soil is fertile and the climate tropical and it requires only irrigation, from Wady Kelt or from the Jordan, to make the whole region again as the garden of the Lord. Lemon, fig, and other fruit trees grow luxuriantly. The plain is covered with bushes, shrubs, and trees. The yellow apple of Sodom is found, the nubk tree or the “spina Christi,” whose thorny branches enclosed the gardens of the people of modern Jericho, and the myrobalanum, the so-called “balm of Gilead,” grows in many places around the modern city. It is named Zakkum by the Arabs, the bark of which is of a greyish colour, and its fruit resembles green plums, from which a fragrant oil is extracted. This rich plain lies waste, because the Turkish Government exists only to crush the people. Jews and Syrians see the evil, but cannot cure it. The vast majority of the people regard Britain as the only country that can and will help them. And the time may speedily come, when the flag of Britain will fly over Jerusalem, Nazareth and Beirût, a sign to the people that a paternal and Christian Government will rule them in equity ; then the plain of Jericho and the other fertile plains of Palestine will support happy and industrious millions.

* Paradise Regained iii.

PART III.



WOMEN GRINDING AT A MILL.

NORTHERN PALESTINE AND SYRIA AND ASIA.

CHAPTER XVI.

FROM JERUSALEM TO SAMARIA AND JENNIN.

“Unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.”—*Joshua i. 2.*



EARLY on the morning of the second of April, in company with one or two Europeans and Americans, I visited for the last time the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This was the first day of Easter week. We obtained a place in the gallery overlooking the small church under the dome. In half-an hour after we entered, the whole area beneath was one mass of living beings. Men and women were there, some of the latter carrying children in their arms. Armenians, Copts, Greeks and Latins crowded each other until it seemed impossible for another person to find standing room. Greek, Armenian and Latin priests were seen here and there among the people; in their black robes and wearing their high, black hats. Some of the people were clothed in long gowns, others from the remote parts of Palestine, or from Russia, wore short jackets, and for the most part, men and women had their head uncovered. Each one carried a palm that had been brought from Gaza or the plain of Jericho, and was eager to have it blessed by their respective ecclesiastic

dignitary. The excited and fanatical multitude surged to and fro until the procession round the church that covers the tomb was ready to start. Then Turkish soldiers with drawn swords in their hands beat back the crowds against the walls of the rotunda, and against the pillars and the small church. In their efforts to make an opening for the procession, their zeal was stimulated by their hatred for infidels in general. It is a proverb in European countries that the weak must go to the wall; but in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the strong went to the wall and remained there as firm as a rock, while the women and the weaker men were pushed to the front where they were in danger of being knocked down and trampled under foot by the Turks. I noticed a woman who was pushed forward by the solid mass of human beings behind her; it was utterly impossible for her to move back one inch, she could not reach the door to escape, even had she been so minded, to move forward was to expose herself to violence. A soldier more insolent than the rest came along to broaden the space for the procession. He pressed his sword against the bodies of the front line to make them yield. This poor woman could not move, for behind her the people were like a wall. The Turk's eyes flashed, he grasped her by the throat and forced her, not back among the multitude, but over them, on the top of their heads.

The Latins, Greeks, Armenians, and Copts, march on Palm Sunday, three times round the church over the tomb of our Lord. I saw the procession of the Latins and Greeks, and came away convinced that ignorance, formality and fanaticism, not spirituality, govern in the city, and near the grandest scenes of the Son of God, who is the light and life of men. The large candles in front of the grave were lighted and the whole church was ablaze with light in the early morning. The procession, representing the triumphal entrance of Christ

into Jerusalem, began. Boys headed it carrying large branches of olive trees, then came others bearing small banners with various mottoes and devices inscribed on them. Behind them were the patriarch and priests and other functionaries of the church, who repeated portions of Scripture and prayers suitable for the occasion. At various places in the procession were boys who were chanting in a doleful tone. After they, slowly and with measured step, had made three circuits round the church, they withdrew to their own part of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the others repeated the same thing. At the close of the second procession, the heat became intense, and the atmosphere heavy, and I was satisfied with what I had seen. Besides, after standing two hours on my feet, I felt exhausted and wished to withdraw. Alexander took the mace belonging to the American consul and went before me into the dense crowd that had closed up in a moment the whole space in rear of the procession. The multitude seemed like India rubber balls squeezed back by fear of the Turkish soldiers into small dimensions, and when the pressure was taken away, they expanded again into their normal size and shape, much to their own comfort. The mass had expanded ere we reached its outer edge, and every inch of room through which the procession had passed was occupied by men and women perspiring at every pore. Alexander beat the end of the mace on the stone floor, the hollow sound seemed familiar to their ears, and it acted like a charm. A small opening was made into which Alexander squeezed himself sideways. Pulling my felt hat tightly down over my face to protect my eyes from the sharp points and edges of the palms which the excited multitude carried in their hands, I forced myself in behind Alexander, along with my friend Mr. J. G. Smart. As Alexander was of less dimensions than myself, I was compelled to force a large opening for myself. He was the point

of the wedge, I the thickest part. At times I was lifted by sheer force six inches or a foot above the floor. Frequent and forcible application of my elbows and a considerable specific gravity overcame the lateral pressure of the opposing forces, and finally the point of the wedge and the rear of it emerged on the court outside the church. One last struggle near the door was the fiercest of all, and we landed outside as suddenly as if we had been peas shot out of a pop-gun. Though our garments were somewhat the worse for the siege through which we had passed, we were thankful, to reach fresh air and to breathe freely once more. On returning from the scene, I could not help reflecting on the utter lack of all true elements of worship in the whole ceremony. In the very city where men ought to feel the influence of the scenes connected with the life and death, and triumphs of Him who taught men that the form (the flesh) is nothing, but the spirit everything; who taught his own age and all ages that God is a Spirit, and that they who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth; and in this very place, sacred by the traditions of nearly sixteen centuries, where our Lord was laid in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, the multitudes degraded religion into the wildest formality and show. And I felt sure that those Mahommedan soldiers sent there to protect the various sects who occupy the church from doing violence to each other, and who are eye witnesses of these scenes can have anything but an exalted idea of the Christian religion, whose very essence is love to God, and charity and brotherly kindness to all men. However, the light that first shone out from that grand, blessed city, dear to every Christian for the sake of the Lord, the Saviour, and which is now shining upon the ends of the earth, will be reflected back from the pure heart and holy life of men and women who now are teaching and will continue to teach the people of that land that we need,

not the form of godliness, but the power, and that we are justified by faith and not by works.

Among the many scenes of interest that I witnessed in the Holy City, was the celebration of the Passover. It had rained heavily in the early part of the day, and black clouds were ominously hanging over the city. Towards sundown, however, I looked from the roof of the house in which I lodged, towards the Mount of Olives, and saw the clouds were breaking up, and here and there the sunlight was flashing through the rifted clouds, and was mantling the city with unspeakable beauty, and infusing life and cheerfulness into citizens and strangers alike. A few minutes before sundown, I started with one or two friends to a house in the Jewish Quarter, to which we had been invited to witness the feast of the Passover. We missed our bearings and trudged through the narrow, gloomy streets searching for the house. As streets are not named and the houses unnumbered, we were hopeless of finding the place in the darkness. Here and there men flitted past us in silence like shadows, who refused to answer us when we asked for directions. Perhaps they were men of the same spirit as their ancestors, the priest and Levite, who merely glanced at the plundered and wounded man who had fallen into the hands of robbers between Jerusalem and Jericho. We were not, however, so unfortunate, yet we thought they might have spared a moment to help strangers. They were afraid, perhaps, of being late at the feast in some Jewish neighbour's house, and we excused them on the ground of their strong leaning in the direction of punctuality, which grace might well be cultivated to a greater extent among Christian worshippers in Canada, much to the comfort of others and edification of themselves.

We concluded it was useless to search further for the house which we wished to reach ; we were, however, very anxious to

witness the Passover feast in this city, to which hundreds of thousands came from all Palestine to celebrate it in early times, and in the city where it had been celebrated by the Lord Himself. We therefore hastened to the English Society's Hospital which was only two or three minutes' walk in a straight line, but as we had to follow the winding streets, and tumbled about in the darkness, it was nearly ten minutes before we reached the hospital. On entering we found the service had commenced. A plain table extended along one end of the room; the Jews were seated along one side and both ends of the table. A venerable-looking man dressed in a white gown occupied a central place at the table, on which were placed three round scones of unleavened bread, each of which was divided into four quarters. In front of the venerable leader of the service, were parsley and lettuce, also two vessels, one of which contained wine, the other a thick sauce composed of dates, figs, and vinegar. A piece of roast lamb lay on the table. The old leader in the white gown blessed the food, after which a woman came in from an adjoining room with wine, a small quantity of which the leader poured into each person's cup. This they drank four times. In the intervals, however, the Hallel was sung, Psalms cxiii.-cxviii., which was in all probability the hymn sung by our Lord and His disciples on the night of the Passover and just prior to His crucifixion. Other passages from the prophets and from the Talmud were sung in a nasal monotonous tone, each one meanwhile swaying his body backward and forward. A boy of about thirteen years of age, who sat at the left hand of the leader, was singing too fast for the elders. Frequently he was at the end of a passage before the old men had reached the middle of it; when he finished he had to wait until they caught up; then beginning at a furious rate, he rushed far ahead of them again. This became unbearable, and once and again

brought down the severe reproof of the old man, who stopped in the midst of his singing, censured the offender and commanded him to keep time with the elders. The leader took a bunch of parsley, dipped it in the sauce and gave a portion to each person. Towards the close, he poured wine ten times from the large vessel into a smaller one, to symbolize the ten plagues sent on the Egyptians prior to the deliverance of their Hebrew ancestors. At the close of the service, which lasted about two hours, the unleavened bread was distributed to the strangers in the room, a piece of which each of us carried away as a memorial of our visit. The whole service struck me as extremely formal and intended to impress the Gentile visitors rather than to do good to those engaged in it. However, it is another evidence that the veil remains over the eyes of Israel to this day. Their city is down-trodden under the feet of bigotted Turks, the land that God gave their fathers is cursed; they are cherishing a vain hope in their divine-inflicted blindness of soul, as they cry, "Help us, O God of our salvation!" The Lord whom they seek has come, and their fathers have crucified Him; His blood is upon their head, and in penalty for their crime, they are the despised and alien race of the world. Palestine, Jerusalem in her humiliation, and the Jews in their steady and continued unbelief, are a united and impregnable witness for the truth of Scripture. Their history is full of lessons for nations in these days. History repeats itself, because God's law repeats itself. God is the same, and therefore the fate of every nation that turns aside from truth and obedience to God shall be the same. The hope of the nations of modern times is not in education alone or in the progress of scientific knowledge, but in a firm adherence to the law of God, and the will of God. Not only is our life as a race bound up with that of the Jews, but they are a factor in the future of all races of the world; "for if the casting

away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead."

On the fourth of April, I took a last walk round the walls of Jerusalem. Her "bulwarks" have fallen and her palaces are no more, but there is a power in Jerusalem, in her dust, to awe the mind and impress the traveller with veneration for her hills and valleys and ruins of once famous places. The trees were clad with richest foliage, and along the valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat were flowers of every hue. I crossed Mount Zion outside the walls. Its south-eastern side, where it descends towards the Tyropæon, was covered with wheat. Traces of terraces are to be seen on this side, which may have been formed by soil deposited there in the past ages. To this has been added the debris that has accumulated from the frequent destruction of Jerusalem, so that now there is a considerable depth of soil. Through the whole of Palestine as well as about Jerusalem, one is struck in a thousand ways with the literal fulfilment of Scripture, which strengthens the faith of every Christian, and must be a powerful evidence for its inspiration to every lover of truth. As I pulled up a few stalks of wheat by the roots and preserved them as mementos of my visit, I was forcibly reminded of the judgment of God in regard to Mount Zion: "Therefore, shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps."* Thus to the very letter are the words of the prophet verified by the actual state of things which every one may see. The Psalmist asked the people to walk round Zion and admire her strength and lofty towers. Her glory as a fortified city is no more, even with her ancient defences, modern weapons of war would soon lay her in ruins. But her glory in connection with Christ is imperishable. For her crime she has been trampled

* Micah iii. 12.

by Gentiles of every race almost, but her crime has linked her name and history with Him who is the desire of all nations, and the Saviour of the guilty. This city will be the spot to which the eyes of generations yet unborn will turn, for the death of Christ has engraved its name deeply in the pages of the world's life-history and made it precious to every believer; for there the Son of God defeated death and sin on the cross, and put into the world a new power which has influenced its progress, and which will save it from the corruption of evil and raise it nearer to God in its spirit and many-sided activities. Near the Church of the Ascension, I looked over Jerusalem spread out like a panorama before me. I could see fanatical Mahomedans hurrying to and fro about the Mosque of Omar, and beyond, the streets were crowded with pilgrims from many and distant lands. The tombs of the prophets and the garden of Gethsemane were on the slope of Olivet, and the Kedron, a narrow gorge extends along the base of the mount towards Siloam. Ophel, Zion, Moriah, Akra, the hill of Evil Counsel and the Mount of Offence were all in sight. These cannot have changed in the centuries since our Lord's day. And, doubtless, over this whole scene He has often looked as He walked across Olivet to Bethany, or sought the retirement of Gethsemane after His labours and teaching among the merciless and lifeless Pharisees and Scribes. Looking down on Jerusalem, built on the same hills as the Jerusalem in which the Son of God lived and suffered, and surrounded by the same mountains, symbols of Jehovah's everlasting protection to His people, I penned the following lines which but feebly expressed my feelings at the time :

My prayer, O Lord, shall aye ascend
For grace divine to follow Thee,
And ever, to earth's utmost end,
Thy name to praise, and faithful be.

Dear is that mount, Gethsemane,
Beneath whose olive shade God's Son
Withdrew, and in deep agony
Prayed, and for man the triumph won.

On all this scene oft did'st Thou gaze,
On vale and mount and sky and flower,
And setting sun, whose golden rays
Gild Zion's homes and David's Tower.

Without the gate, in death's dark hour,
Thou hast triumphed all alone ;
Thy cross now is a cross of power
To bring us to our Father's home.

From this mount 'mid clouds of light,
From toil and sorrow Thou hast gone ;
A little while, and past the night,
Then we shall see Him on His throne.

Lord, let the doom of Zion guide us
Soon will our day of grace be done ;
When the final hour shall reach us
May we then be welcomed home.

A start was made early in the day by the dragoman and muleteers. My friend Mr. Smart had gone with them, and it was arranged that I should join the camp at Sinjil. I decided to leave Jerusalem at one o'clock in the afternoon. My horse was ready and fastened by a rope to an iron ring in the stone wall. Alexander was waiting to receive orders. But at the very hour we expected to ride out of the city, the stranger who had joined us in our visit to the Dead Sea, and who asked permission to accompany us through Palestine, was nowhere to be found. I despatched a man in haste to scour the streets of Jerusalem for him. The messenger found him buying some trinkets in Christian Street; he refused to come as he had other important business to look after. The mes-

senger came back without his man. Every moment was now precious, for black clouds were collecting across the face of the sky, and in order to escape the rain and also to reach the tent before sundown, it was necessary to start immediately. However, I made another effort to get my friend with me: Alexander hurried after him and in a few minutes returned with his man, whom he carried off by sheer force, and landed him at the steps where we were standing. He threatened that all the pains and penalties of British, and Turkish law, too, would be poured on the head of the valiant Alexander. "Now," I said to him, "let us start, for night will overtake us before we reach the tent." In reply to my urgent appeal, he said it would take him half an hour to pack his baggage, and besides, he further replied, "I must wait until my goods come from the shops."

In despair I left him, and rode out through the Damascus Gate for the north, past the tombs of the kings and the judges. Rain had been pouring down on the previous night, which made the bad roads more difficult to travel, for the rough path was slippery, and pools of water were here and there into which my horse plunged occasionally. The domes of the Mosque of Omar and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre soon disappeared, then the Russian buildings on the west of the city, and finally Jerusalem was lost to view. As long as I could trace the outline of the walls and public buildings I turned my face towards the city for a farewell look, and though glad at the prospect of seeing the many famous places in northern Palestine it was with sorrow that I left the "City of the Great King" behind, quoting as I rode quickly on, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."* About a mile and a half north from Jerusa-

* Psalm cxxxvii., 5.

lem, on the east side of the road, is a hill whose summit is covered with ruins. This is probably Nob, the city of the priests; whom Doeg, the Edomite, slew because they had sheltered David, the enemy of Saul. On the left, rose up Neby Samwil, the ancient Mizpah, a fortified place in the days of the fierce wars between the northern and southern kingdoms. There Saul was proclaimed king, there Samuel judged the people; and no more suitable watch tower exists in the south, for from it could be seen invading armies coming from any point of the compass. My horse, at times, plunged into soft mud, and then had to step carefully down over the smooth shelving rock in other places. While I was guiding my horse to escape these dangerous pits, two villainous looking fellows, with long-barrelled guns swung across their shoulders, sprang up from behind a stone wall, and after scanning me for an instant, and looking eagerly north and south to see if any one was near, scampered off in haste as they saw my companion galloping up in the distance. Peasants were returning from the fields to Jerusalem, some of whom responded cheerily when I said "peace be unto you," while others gave a look of fierce hatred and made no reply. On the right, at some distance from the road, is a tell from three to four hundred feet high, the supposed site of Gibeah of Benjamin. The story of the Levite and his concubine holds up the city in a bad light, and the crime of the citizens was atoned for by the almost entire annihilation of Benjamin when all Israel from Dan to Beersheba smote every city with the edge of the sword and "set on fire all the cities that they came to."* In a quarter of an hour Er Râm, ancient Ramah, was left behind, and soon El-Bireh, the ancient Beeroth, was reached. At the entrance was a khan, near a spring of clear water; the walls of this

* Judges xx. 48.

house, that may stand in lieu of a European hotel were composed of rough blocks and interspersed with pieces of carved pillars belonging to some ancient building. The houses were of the ordinary kind, built of unhewn stone, and with flat roofs. The shepherds were leading their sheep and goats into the town for the night; women were returning from labour in the fields, some carrying a bundle of wood on their head, and others lambs in their arms. For through all Palestine the peasant women toil in the fields in sowing time as well as in harvest, so that from the days of Ruth until now she bears the burden in the field with her husband, and besides, has to perform the household duties. They are treated with cruelty by their husbands, who are lazy and jealous as a rule. Hence, even among the better class of the people in the cities they are confined and carefully watched when they go out of the house, which is allowed only at stated hours. As an evidence, among thousands of this state of things, I was going into Jerusalem at sundown, and before me was a woman carrying on her head a large bundle of sticks for fuel, on each shoulder she carried a little child, and in her hand led another who was able to walk, while a few feet in front of her walked her husband carrying only his load of lordly dignity. Such scenes occur every day, and make one feel how degraded the lot of a woman is even in Christ's own land. But when His Gospel shall be the guide of the people then Mahommedan bigotry shall perish, and the day of woman's freedom shall dawn. Though there are a few mills driven by water, for grinding grain, most of this work is yet done by the hand mills in cities and villages. A piece of cloth is spread on the ground, the mill-stones are placed on it, two women then sit down to grind. The stones are about twenty or twenty-four inches in diameter, the lower one is about six inches thick, the upper one being somewhat less. The nether mill-stone is frequently

of a harder material than the upper stone, and so explains Job's statement that the heart of a leviathan is "as hard as a piece of the nether mill-stone."* The pleasant soothing sound of these mills is heard towards evening in all the villages of Palestine. The ceasing of the grinding was a sign of the awful desolation inflicted by Nebuchadnezzar on Judah and Jerusalem: "I will take from them the sound of the mill-stones and the light of the candle."† Mill-stones were used by the Israelites in their journey through the desert, and doubtless were in use in Egypt. They were so important an item of the household that they could not be pledged, for they were indispensable to prepare the daily food of the family. Women are yet seen performing this menial work as they did in ancient times. It is probable the woman of Thebez hurled the upper mill-stone of the mill at which she was working, and broke the skull of Abimelech, and our Lord, urging the importance of being ready for the coming of the Son of Man, emphasises the uncertainty of life by saying, "Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left."‡ In Jerusalem one woman possesses mill-stones, and her neighbours send wheat to her to be ground, and thus she ekes out a scanty living for herself, if she happens to be a cripple, or infirm, or a poor widow. Grinding at the mill was the work of the slaves and poorest of the people from ancient times. Samson, after his eyes were dug out by the Philistines, ground at the mill in his prison in Gaza, and when Jehovah threatened punishment on the highest and lowest in the land of Egypt, it was to be inflicted on the "first-born of Pharaoh unto the first-born of the maidservant that is behind the mill."§

It was nearing sundown as I rode over the fertile plain beyond Bireh; swollen streams were rushing violently down

* Job xli. 24. † Jeremiah xxv. 10. ‡ Matthew xxiv. 41. § Exod. xi. 5.

after the recent heavy rains. The air was cold, and dark clouds were rushing along the bleak sky and threatening to drench me to the skin as I rode up the shelving brow of the hill on which Beitîn stands, the site of the ancient Bethel. Some ancient materials were built into the walls of the houses, and on the south side of the village stand the ruins of an old tower and some ancient foundations. The barren hills of grey limestone appeared dreary in the extreme, as I rode over the rugged ledges rising one above the other, on one of which, perhaps, Jacob slept with a loose stone for a pillow as he journeyed to Padan Aram, and on the morning, after the vision of the ladder and the angels, "set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on the top of it," and on his return built an altar to God there. Near this same Bethel Abraham built an altar and called upon the name of the Lord, and from the hill on the south-east of Bethel, Lot had looked upon the plain of the Jordan, near Jericho, and chose it for its fertility. Jeroboam saw danger to his throne while the people of his kingdom worshipped the same Jehovah as the people of Judah; he therefore set up in Bethel one of the two calves of gold which he made, and "made a house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people." Bethel then became for years the seat of this idolatrous worship, until the gorgeous and debasing worship of Baal was established in Samaria. During that time "sons of the prophets" were in Bethel, and God was worshipped. In later days it evidently was a place of importance, for there were "houses of ivory and great houses," and in the period of religious revival and zeal during the reign of Josiah he broke down the altar of Jeroboam and "burned the high place," "and took the bones out of the sepulchres and burned them upon the altar and polluted it." * I found it difficult to realize the great events that had

transpired on this small barren hill, and the famous men whose history is interwoven with Bethel. And everywhere in Palestine the truth is forced on one that Godlike men and noble deeds make the humblest spot on earth famous forever. The shepherds were coming home leading their flocks and herds into the town from the rich valleys in which they had pastured during the day. Many of them gave us no friendly welcome to their village, but to have plundered us on that cold dreary evening would have been a more congenial work than to give a welcome and shelter for the night. The shepherds of Bethel walked before their sheep, some of them carrying lambs in the folds of their gown, in their bosom. The women who followed with bundles of sticks on their head, were also carrying small bleating lambs in their arms or in their bosom. The Abyah or outer gown of the men and women is so arranged that they can carry their goods in a capacious pocket formed in the folds of this garment. This ancient custom of the shepherds of the East was employed by God to teach His people His infinite tenderness and love, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather His lambs with His arm and carry them in His bosom."* Thousands of generations have been born and have died since patriarchs have lived near Bethel, and angels were seen in vision, but the God of Jacob is the same yesterday to-day and forever, in his good-will to man.

The horse I had taken from Jerusalem was in good condition, clean limbed and seemed well able to carry me through Northern Palestine. I was soon disappointed, however, in regard to his merits, for just outside the city gate he began to make numerous revolutions and sudden lateral and backward movements. One other failing, in addition to his mulishness, was his stumbling propensity which ex-

* Isaiah xl. 11.

posed me to considerable danger, and detracted from the pleasure of the journey. On riding down the brow of the hill from Sinjil to Shiloh, I reined him in well, but on reaching the bottom, Alexander and Mr. Smart urged their horses into a fast canter. The ground was soft after the rain, and numerous holes full of water were concealed by long grass and shrubs. Into one of these the nigh fore-foot of my horse plunged suddenly as we were rushing over the plain, through extensive gardens of fig trees and vineyards, in an instant he was hurled over on his back, and I was thrown violently from the saddle a distance of fifteen or twenty feet, slid on my knees and elbows on the soft red soil, and finally landed on my head and arms in the midst of a low thorny bush. I found no bones were broken, the only damage being a coating of red clay from head to foot and a few scratches on my hand and face, from which blood flowed freely. There seems little doubt that Seilun is the site of ancient Shiloh. Close to it is a small building in whose walls are built pieces of pillars and hewn stone from some ancient edifice. This may have been a place of worship, but now is deserted. I found a plough and some other farming tools lying on the floor, and on the roof, which is reached by stairs from the outside, grass and flowers were growing under the shadow of an oak and some olive trees. Between this building and Shiloh is a pool which may have supplied the citizens of Shiloh with water in Samuel's time, or been used in the religious services of the early heathen tribes. The ruins of Shiloh are situated on a hill from eighty to one hundred feet high, which slopes gently down on every side to the plain, and is covered with ruins from the base to the summit. Traces of houses, which have been built of unhewn stone, are seen from the bottom to the top of the hill. Some of the foundations, however, were much larger than others; the lower tiers of which were composed of great blocks of hewn

stone, and some of the walls were over four feet in thickness. These larger houses were situated near the top of the hill. It is probable a wall extended round the base such as can be traced round Tel-el-Kâdi, at the fountain of the Jordan. The house in which the ark was kept would naturally be in the safest, and therefore the highest place, round which would cluster the houses of the better class, while those of the common people would be lower down. These large houses appeared to have been from twenty-five to thirty feet square, while the smaller ones were from ten to fifteen feet. Streets six to eight feet wide could be traced from the top to the bottom of the hill. May not the feet of Eli and Samuel and Hannah have trodden these very narrow passages, and one of those large and very ancient ruins have been the foundation of the house of the Lord in which Samuel ministered? In Shiloh the land was divided among the tribes of Israel, and at the gate of the city, Eli received the news of the defeat of Israel, the death of his sons and the capture of the ark, and there he died. In his last words to his sons, Jacob prophesied of Judah "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." * The shevet or sceptre is a club about two or three feet long, one end of which is large and generally studded with iron spikes, and a longer one projects from the end which can be used as a spear. This is employed by shepherds to defend themselves and their flocks from the attacks of robbers and wild beasts. It was, and is, carried by the head of every tribe as a symbol of rank and authority. Here Jacob foretold that Judah should hold the sceptre until the Messiah should come. Many wrong interpretations have been given to the words; as that Judah would hold "the sceptre until He

* Gen. xlix. 10.

came to the city of Shiloh." But Judah retained it along with Benjamin long after the revolt of the ten tribes who met at Shechem, and not Shiloh. Besides, if the power had departed from Judah, how could there be "the obedience of the nations to him?" Judah retained its tribal existence and power until the period of the Roman dominion, and thus the event has proved the truth of the prophecy and the Messianic interpretation of it, "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until the (Messiah) the Peace Maker comes, and unto him shall the obedience of the people be."^{*}

The site of Shiloh is easily determined by its relative position to other well-known places, "on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem and on the south of Lebonah."[†] In the rich plain that surrounds the hill were vineyards just as there are now, and in them the Benjamites hid themselves, and when the daughters of Shiloh came out to dance, probably after the gathering of the vintage, carried them captive for their wives. The place is desolate enough now; there is no granduer about Shiloh, except perhaps in the high hills that extend on the east along the plain, but it has played a prominent part in history of Israel, and there we see some of the noble qualities of the people of God, and also their vile iniquity which ultimately brought the city to ruin. It is a witness of the truth of divine prophecy and of the eternal law of God, that the vials of his wrath will be poured on every city that does evil: "Go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel."[‡]

The deep chasm in the limestone hills that bound the west

^{*} Hirschfelder's Bib. Expos., Pt. iv. [†] Judges xxi. 19. [‡] Jerem. vii. 12.

side of the plain of Mukhna, forms the Valley of Nablûs, in which the modern Nablûs, the ancient Shechem is situated. At the entrance to this valley is Jacob's well, at which our Lord conversed with the woman of Samaria. It is about seventy or eighty feet deep, and eight or nine in diameter. Near it is an arch of an old church, and some ruins are lying scattered about. From the surface of the ground to the mouth of the well, which is covered by a stone slab with a circular hole in the centre, is a distance of eight feet. Below this stone begins the well whose water Jacob and his cattle had drank, and beside which our Lord taught the truth that His kingdom is independent of local holy places and human prejudice, and is not for one race or one land, but for the world and for all nations. It may seem strange that Jacob should have dug a well when there were streams of water in the valley and away westward of Nablûs. As Dr. Thomson remarks, however, the well is a "positive fact, and it must have been dug by somebody and why not by Jacob?"* Though the children of Hamor would sell him a parcel of a field, they would not be willing to allow his numerous flocks to pasture in the valley of Nablûs, or share the water which has always been precious in the eyes of the Orientals. In order to prevent trouble with his neighbours and be independent he would naturally dig a well; and there can be little doubt that the well at the entrance of the valley is the identical one from which the patriarch drank, and at which our wearied Lord rested at noonday. The spot was venerated by the Jews until our Lord's time, and in the interval, until Eusebius and the Bordeaux Pilgrim, it seems impossible the site could have been lost. Jerome in his "Epitaphium Paulæ" informs us that Paula visited the church at the side of Gerizim, over the

* Land and Book, p. 473.

well of Jacob, and in the sixth, eighth, twelfth centuries and onward, it is mentioned.

As our Lord went north to Galilee he came "to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar. Now Jacob's Well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well; and it was about the sixth hour."* If Sychar, be identical with Shechem, the modern Nablûs, it would be more than a mile to the town, even if it were situated as far east as Ain Defneh near the modern Turkish barracks. Thither the disciples went for bread while He rested by the well. Some, however, have identified Sychar with Askar, a village a short distance north-east of the well. Dr. Thomson, speaking of Askar, says: "This is so like John's Sychar, I feel inclined to adopt it;"† and in support of this view he says, "It is incredible that the woman of Samaria should have gone two miles away from those delicious fountains to draw water out of an immensely deep well." The derivation and the structure of the two words are different; besides, as Askar lies on the route northward and only a short distance from the well, would our Lord not naturally have gone to the city and obtained bread, water, and shelter there as it lay on his route? Dr. Thomson supposes the woman to have been a citizen of Shechem up the valley; may she not have belonged to any of the villages on the brow of the hill along the plain? But even if she were a woman of Shechem may she not have been working in the rich fields that extend eastward along the plain? This supposition is strengthened by the time of the occurrence. It was noon, when the labourers in the field rest, and doubtless it was the duty, as it is now, of the women to carry water in the large earthen jars for the men in the field, when no well or stream of water is near from which they could drink. Her

* John iv. 5, 6. † Land and Book, 472.

departure to the city, rather than to the fields, was quite natural, for as the conversation had been on religious questions, and the stranger had declared himself to be the promised Messiah, it would be important news for the priests and chief men, who would be better able to speak with the stranger and weigh his claims to be the Messiah. On the whole, therefore, the probability is that Shechem and Sychar are the same city, on the site of which stands the modern Nablûs.

To the north-east of the well is an enclosed spot, about twelve feet square. This is Joseph's tomb. The existence of the tomb is mentioned by Eusebius, and there seems no reason to doubt that the embalmed body of the patriarch was buried somewhere near the entrance to the valley, for he "was buried in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor,"* and that parcel could not have extended up the valley as far as Ain Defneh and Ain Balâta, for then Jacob would not have required to dig the well. Besides, the language in Genesis, "a parcel of a field" in which Joseph was buried signifies a level area, capable of cultivation. The traditional site suits these requirements. As I rode across the valley black ominous clouds were driven over the lofty summits of Gerizim and Ebal, and I had just entered the enclosure of the tomb when the rain fell in torrents. The wind drove the clouds down the valley towards the Jordan, and I found some shelter by pressing closely against the south wall of the enclosure, but as it was open from above, I was exposed to the fury of the blast and was soon drenched. Though God had raised Joseph to power and honour in Egypt, he wished his body to lie in the land which was to be the inheritance of his descendants. And during forty years in the desert the Israelites carried the embalmed body of their great ancestor ;

*Judges xxiv. 32.

though they fought battles, though a new generation arose, yet they never abandoned the body until they deposited it near Shechem to await the day when the earth, and the sea, and hell shall give up their dead.

I rode in the pelting rain through the poor village of Balâta, through which a brook of clear sweet water was flowing with considerable force. My horse plunged through heaps of rubbish and mud pools at the risk of breaking its own legs and my neck. The hovels of Balâta were the most wretched I saw in all Palestine. The entrance, which was level with the road, would admit only one person at a time, crawling in on hands and knees, and most of the huts had only one room large enough to allow a person to squat on the floor. In this attitude, I saw women and children crouching and shivering round a smouldering fire of twigs in the middle of the floor. How terrible the misery of the common people of the land! The hands of the people are weak for war, their spirit is crushed out by the oppression of centuries. May the God of justice speedily send a power that by war or the peaceful conquests of education and Christianity, may overturn the diabolical system of government, and remove the men who thus delight in human degradation and misery!

The Valley of Nablûs is rich in its soil, in the grandeur of its scenery, in great names also, and famous deeds of more than thirty centuries ago. None can ride up that vale unmoved by a deep veneration for the deathless names associated with it from Abraham to Christ. The greatest breadth of the valley is about five hundred yards. On the north side rises Ebal, and on the south Gerizim to a height of eight hundred feet above the plain. On its summit stand the ruins of the Samaritan temple, built about 400 B.C. and a rival to the temple in Jerusalem. This is the mountain, doubtless, to which our Lord pointed when teaching the woman at Jacob's Well, as He said:

"The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father." * It was destroyed 129 B.C., but its general outline and size may be determined. There the Samaritans go yearly to celebrate the Passover, and as the sun is gilding in glory the highlands of Judæa and the distant shores of the Mediterranean, the high priest repeats Exodus xii. 6; and the knife is plunged into the white lamb without blemish, and the strange weird service continues through the night.

At the foot of Gerizim, eastward of the modern city, is a chapel that marks some traditional site. Though I was deaf to all the stories of Samaritan priests and tradition, I felt quite sure that every yard of ground was the scene of famous events of by-gone centuries. There Abimelech's brutal butchery of his seventy brothers took place, and there he was made king by the oak of the pillar that was in Shechem. May this stone pillar not be the one which was set up by Joshua under the oak by the sanctuary of the Lord as a witness of the covenant between God and the Israelites? An additional sanctity would also attach to the place if this were the very oak, as it might easily have been, under which the patriarch Abraham spread his tent on his journey south. At this place a foot-path leads up the brow of Gerizim over tiers of shelving limestone, and at a third of the distance from the valley a large level area is formed by a mass of projecting rock. Here, perhaps, stood the loud-voiced Levites and read the blessings, and from an opposite point on Ebal the curses were read. In the valley, the great hosts of Israel stood, their elders, their judges and officers. On Ebal they had erected an altar of great unhewn stones and plastered them over with cement, and on it wrote the law with iron tools. When one looks upon the perfect graffites on the

* John iv. 21.

Palatine in Rome, where they have been exposed to wind and rain for over eighteen hundred years, that writing on the plaster at Ebal might have continued until now had it not been destroyed by the ravages of many invasions.

Standing on that overhanging ledge of Gerizim, I tried to recall the scene enacted in the valley and on these hill tops more than thirty centuries ago. The vast multitude thronged the valley; they had been born in the desert or in Canaan itself, and heard only from their fathers of the bondage from which God delivered them. Joshua, now well stricken in years, stood on the mount and read the law with the Levites. From Ebal resounded the warning of Jehovah, "Cursed be the man that maketh any graven or molten image," * and a myriad of voices like the sound of many waters echoing throughout the valley cried, "Amen." From Gerizim came the blessings, and the people responded "Amen." No such gathering had ever been seen in Israel like this. God had guided them through the awful Desert, smitten their foes before them and had now given them the land of Canaan. The wind came sweeping down the valley, sounding mournfully in the hollows of the mountains, at times like a thunder of voices and then dying into a gentle whisper. I closed my eyes, and in imagination I fancied they were the echoes of the sea of voices below as they cried in their strong enthusiasm and faith, "The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey." The valley is covered with old olive trees, gnarled and twisted in the growth of many centuries. Nablûs lies in a semicircular recess formed by the range of mountains behind it; its streets are narrow, roughly paved and many of them are covered above and built over as in Jerusalem. About one hundred and fifty of the population are Samaritans. They are of medium height, of

* Deut. xxvii. 15.

light bronze complexion and are an interesting subject of discussion to Ethnologists. I regarded them with great interest as the remnant of the idolatrous tribes "which the king of Assyria brought from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria." *

Josephus states: "Shalmanezer removed the Israelites out of the country and placed therein the nations of the Cutheans, who had formerly belonged to the inner parts of Persia and Media, but were then called Samaritans by taking the name of the country to which they were removed." * Though the Samaritans themselves say, in harmony with Ezra iv. 2, that their ancestors were brought into the country by Esarhaddon; whenever it has appeared to their advantage, they have professed to be descendants of the Jewish patriarchs. They were and are regarded by the Jews as an alien race. Our Lord calls them men of a foreign race, and the same animosity that existed between Jews and Samaritans for more than seven hundred years until the time of Christ is yet intensely bitter. Josephus tells how they waylaid the Galileans on their journey to the feast in Jerusalem, and even went so far in their religious fanaticism and national hatred as to throw corpses into the courts of the temple at night at the feast of the Passover, in order to defile the sacred places of the Jews. The feeling was mighty in our Lord's day, for we read how they refused to give him hospitality in one of their villages; and on that occasion the enmity even of the disciples, as Jews, flamed out as they said, Lord, command fire to come down and consume them. The Rabbis held that a Samaritan is to be considered as a heathen, and that whoever received a Samaritan into his house, deserved that his children go into exile.

* 2 Kings xviii. 24. † Jos. Ant. x. 9, 7.

But our Lord taught by His conversation at the well and His acceptance of Samaritan hospitality, and by His healing the Samaritan as well as the Jew, that His grace embraced all races, and that His Gospel was for Samaritans as well as for the Jews.

In the south east part of the town is situated the Mosque, a Christian church in the days of the crusaders, but now the property of the ignorant and fanatical Mahommedans. The gate is exceedingly handsome, the circular columns on each side of this entrance are graceful and the capitals delicately carved. Outside of this gate, some huge granite columns are lying on the street. They are too large to have been placed originally in this church by the crusaders. They have been dug up, I believe, from the rubbish in the area of the court belonging to the mosque. They certainly do not belong to any recent style of architecture, and have not been brought there since the country became a part of the Turkish Empire. The massive columns belong to an ancient style of workmanship and unquestionably date back prior to the beginning of the Christian age. We have no evidence that the Romans erected any building in which such columns might have been used. It is not unreasonable to suppose they may have belonged to the time of Abimelech and the early days of Shechem's existence. We read that there was a house of Baal-berith, a heathen temple, from whose revenue they gave Abimelech seventy pieces of silver, with which to bribe the masses, to aid him in his murderous efforts to reach the throne over the dead bodies of his brothers. One regards these fallen columns therefore with some interest, as the visible remnants of a remote and heathen past, which have remained unchanged through all the changes which many centuries have brought on ancient Shechem. In the centre of the court of this mosque is a well where the faithful performed their ablutions, which they need

very much for sanitary as well as religious reasons. However, as they confine their washing to their feet and hands their washing is not effective for the first object. A crowd of scowling, infidel-hating fellows were round the well as I passed it. Their look did not indicate friendly feeling, so I omitted all salutations and quietly passed by.

At the south-western part of Nablûs is situated the Samaritan synagogue. Along with Mr. Smart, I wended my way through dark narrow streets, through the middle of which small streams were flowing, which in the winter season swell into powerful torrents, and after many turnings reached the synagogue. The price to see the manuscript in possession of the priests was exorbitant. One of our friends, who was not greatly interested in such things, said he was not going to submit to be plundered in this fashion, by beggarly Samaritans. By the friendly aid of a missionary of the Baptist Church, to whom I here express my thanks for many items of valuable information, and for his kindness in aiding me in my visit to the famous places about Nablûs, the demands were greatly reduced. We paid our bukshish, took off our boots, and entered the synagogue. The room was small, the walls white-washed, and destitute of pictures, or any ornamentation of art. The priest went into a small recess on the left, separated from the main room of the synagogue by a curtain, and in a short time returned with a roll in his hand. There are three copies of the Pentateuch in their possession; and, as they dislike to show the genuine one, the priests often impose on the ignorant by exhibiting one of the common copies. In order to prevent deception, I asked him to bring the three together. The ancient one, which the priest gravely informed us dated back to Abraham, is contained in a silver cylinder about two feet long. The age of the manuscript is a subject of dispute among scholars, and is yet *sub judice*, though it is generally admit-

ted that it cannot date prior to the beginning of the Christian Era. The vellum is about fifteen inches wide and covered with crimson satin. The letters are irregular, and many almost obliterated. It is patched in numerous places, and the letters on these patches are less regular and beautiful than on the original.

Though the variations between the Samaritan and the Hebrew text of the Pentateuch are insignificant, there is one which shows how bitter the hatred was between the Jews and the Samaritans. In the Hebrew text we read that Moses commanded, "It shall be when ye shall be gone over Jordan that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in Mount Ebal. . . . and there shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God."* The Samaritan Pentateuch has in its text "Gerizim" instead of "Ebal," which became their holy mount in opposition to Mount Moriah in Jerusalem, on which the Temple of Solomon stood. It is generally conceded that the text has been falsified by the Samaritans, in order to add to their national glory, and as the result of their fierce antagonism to the Jews. To Gerizim therefore the woman of Samaria pointed with pride when she said to our Lord, "our fathers worshipped in this mountain." The "Samaritan Joshua," which is a history of the race, full of myths and anachronisms, informs us that the Samaritans rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar who had subdued Palestine. They, together with the Jews in Jerusalem, fled from their country. Meanwhile Nebuchadnezzar brought in strangers from Persia to occupy the land. The worship of Jehovah had been abandoned, and a gross system of idolatry was set up. The curse of God rested on the land and on the idolaters. Josephus seems to have copied the Samaritan traditions. He says: "They provoked

* Deuteronomy xxvii. 4, 5.

Almighty God to be angry at them, for a plague seized them; and when they found no cure for their miseries, they learned by the oracle that they ought to worship Almighty God as the method of their deliverance."* Nebuchadnezzar therefore allowed Samaritans and Jews to return to their own land; whereupon the former desired to build a temple to God on Gerizim, the latter wished to go to the Holy City and worship Jehovah there. The question of the right place to worship God was referred to the king. Both parties appealed to the sacred books in support of their views. The king who was probably indifferent about these holy hills, and hated both Jews and Samaritans alike, put their sacred books through the ordeal of fire. The Jewish Pentateuch was consumed at once and reduced to ashes. On the other hand, the Samaritan book leaped out of the flames three times into the king's lap. As a fitting conclusion to this method of doing justice, a number of the unfortunate Jews were beheaded, while three hundred thousand Samaritans worshipped God on the mount of "Mount of Blessing"†—Gerizim.

On starting from Nablûs many lepers gathered around our camp with part of their hands and faces eaten away. Some were on couches, others only able to crawl. The sight of such misery can never be effaced from the memory of one who once sees it. The most hardened must become compassionate for them in their terrible sufferings of an incurable disease and also in utter blindness of soul. Little is done for them by the Turkish Government. All that has been done of any importance to mitigate their sufferings and pour a few drops of sweetness in their cup so full of bitterness is done by Christian men and women under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. Such deeds are the glory of Christianity and the evidence of

* Ant. ix., xiv. 3. † *Vide* Smith's Dict. of Bible, Sam.

its living power and divine origin. And while Christian organizations and individuals do such merciful works as is done among the lepers of Palestine, the Gospel of the Grace of God will defy all the fierce attacks of its foes.

The hospital outside the Jaffa Gate, founded by Baron Keffenbrinck, is the only well regulated institution in the country; but, as it is supported by private donations, the directors are unable to do all they wish to relieve the lepers. The building is well ventilated. I visited the institution, to inquire as to the nature of the disease and treatment. The face and hands of the men and women were swollen to an immense size. There were large sores on the face and other parts of the body, from which offensive matter was oozing. No remedy has been yet discovered by those physicians who have made leprosy a specialty. The spots first appear on the children of leprous parents, when about eleven years of age, and the utmost that medical science can yet do is to take these children before that age and by suitable treatment prevent the development of the disease. During certain stages of the disease the victims suffer terrible agony. The night previous to my visit, the matron informed me a man had cut off three of his fingers with a large knife. Thus those wretched ones live till they lie down to die, uncared for by loving friends. At Jerusalem, Nablûs, and Damascus, no infidels, no materialists are found putting forth a finger to relieve these terrible sufferers. Christians provide the money, and the grace of God. These are the men and women who spend their life in such homes tending the sores, comforting the heart and teaching these outcasts of the land, some of whom, at Nablûs, may well be the descendants of that covetous Gehazi, who went out from Elisha's presence, a leper as white as snow. We left Nablûs shortly after sunrise and bade farewell to our kind-hearted friend, the Rev. Mr. Carey. A number of the

citizens were already around the tents, and also eight or ten lepers. After the tents were struck and the baggage horses had left we parted from that strange company of Samaritans, Jews and lepers, and rode westward for some distance between vineyards and gardens of fig trees, already covered with leaves and green figs. Clear, sweet streams were flowing through the gardens, and were used both for irrigation and also for the purpose of driving a mill of some considerable size. The whole region was like an earthly paradise, and Jotham must have looked down from Mount Gerizim on such gardens as these when he spoke his parable of warning to the men of Shechem.

Early in the forenoon we reached the hill on which Samaria, the modern Sabastia, was built. Omri* bought it for two talents of silver from Shemer, and called the name of the capital which he founded Samaria. The hill is about six hundred feet above the level of the valley, which is extremely fertile. On the south a colonnade winds round the brow of the hill over the ruins of splendid terraces and gardens that covered it in the days of Herod. About one hundred columns are standing of different styles and capitals. To this spot came Naaman from far Damascus to be healed by the King of Israel. Even in England, in early days, the king was supposed to have power to cure many diseases by the touch of his hand. This belief was the natural result of an ancient superstition. The people regarded their king as a demigod, and invested him with supernatural gifts. This was certainly the case in the East where kings assumed titles implying that they had descended from the gods. The King of Israel, however, confessed his utter inability to heal the leper: "Am I God to kill and to make alive?" Benhadad and Naaman also had to learn that none but the God of Israel could heal him.

* 1 Kings xvi. 24.

On the top of the hill toward the south-east is the wretched modern village, the walls of whose houses have pieces of old pillars and carved stone built into them which may have belonged to the temple of Baal or the palace of Herod. A short distance west of the village is a level area used for a threshing floor, and higher up is a number of broken columns lying prostrate in a field of wheat. This may have been the site of the temple of Baal, the scene of the terrible butchery of all the priests and worshippers of that heathen deity. Though Jehu broke down the image of Baal and destroyed the temple it was not on account of his hatred of idolatry, for he himself worshipped the golden calves in Bethel and Dan, his motive was not God's glory, and yet it was governed by God, so that evil was punished, for He makes the wrath of man to serve Him. On the south side are ruins of what must have been an extensive building, with broad flights of steps leading up to it. This may be all that is left of the magnificent palace erected in honour of Augustus. A church in the modern village, of the age of the Crusaders, is of interest. On the walls that enclose the area is seen a number of crosses, though probably the church and walls are built of material used in the time of Herod. For three years Shalmaneser besieged Samaria. In the ninth year of Hosea Israel was carried away into Assyria and colonized the cities of the Medes. The Bible does not state the name of the king who finally conquered Samaria; it merely states he was King of Assyria. The Assyrian records inform us that Sargon, the successor of Shalmaneser, in his first year on the throne took Samaria, though his predecessor had besieged it,* and thus the records in that strange cuneiform language in a distant land, again verify the Word of God. Philip, in apostolic days, preached

* Rawl. His. Evidences, 119.

Christ in Samaria and wrought miracles, and there was great joy in the city. Now it is a poor village, whose inhabitants are fierce and ignorant; wheat is growing on the sites of royal palaces and heathen shrines, and the fulfilment of God's judgment is written in the ruins of Samaria: "I will make Samaria as an heap of the field and as plantings of a vineyard, and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley and I will discover the foundations thereof."*

In about six hours from Samaria the tent was reached at Jennin the ancient En-gannin. During the afternoon I visited Tell Dothaim the ancient Dothan. The sides of the hill were green with wheat, through which I rode to the top, which was covered with ruins of ancient structures, among which were growing old olive trees and a few hawthorn trees in bloom. The plain stretched on every side clothed with rich pasture capable of supporting vast herds. At this place Joseph found his brothers, and here they sold him to the Ishmaelites† on their route to Egypt with spices. Even now the caravans from Gilead come along the Valley of Beisan, and turn south at the foot of Gilboa, and pass Jennin and Dothan. At the base of the hill is a circular well whose curbing stones are unhewn in which when dry, or in others that may exist in the plains here Joseph may have been cast. In the days of Elisha, Benhadad compassed this hill by night with a mighty host; they encamped in the plain to cut off escape. But higher up the hill were horses and chariots of fire, and the Lord smote the host with blindness, and the prophet led them to Samaria along the plain I had just crossed. Through every age, in every trial, and in every country, whether in the fiery furnace in Babylon, in the martyr's prison and chains in Rome or Philippi, in dangers in Palestine, and in the struggles of a Christian life in Canada, to

* Micah i. 6. † Genesis xxxvii.

be like Christ, and to imitate his deeds of holiness and love, the same truth is a tower of defence and a heaven of courage; they that are for the Lord's people are more than they that are against them. I arrived at Jennin at dark, and found the tent pitched in a graveyard. The reason for selecting this spot and infringing upon the possessions of the dead I could not learn. There was ample room in several places near the village. Perhaps the man who had charge of the tent thought that a night among tombstones was good enough for infidel dogs, and would help to keep myself and companions in humble meditation for one night at least on our latter end. At some distance from the camp I heard loud angry voices, and hastening to the scene of action, I found that our dragoman, whose own nose had been broken in some fray years ago, had taken a tent peg and struck the young man, who had pitched the tent among the graves, violently over the nose. Blood was flowing freely, and knives were threateningly held up in a number of hands. I was thankful when I found that the dragoman had not driven the peg through the young man's temple, as Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, had done to Sisera. High above the babel of voices, I could distinguish the shrill voice of our rascally dragoman shouting, "We are all Christians, we are all Christians, let us be at peace." If a motley crowd of Syrians and Mahommedans to whom plunder or even murder would be no serious matter could be Christians, they could claim to be such. The cause of the trouble, I soon discovered to be that the dragoman was angry at the site chosen for the tent among the graves; whether he was fighting for our honour or avenging the dead men whose tombs would be defiled by our presence I do not know.

Two watchmen were obtained from the village to guard the tent, and in the quiet hours of the night I heard them discussing, in deep gutturals, the amount of bukshish they would

receive in the morning for their service. The watchmen of the east are an important class of people, not to be trusted, however, in general, for their honesty or justice. In the vineyards in southern Palestine are built stone towers for the watchmen to guard the ripening fruit, and in the rural parts a rude tent is constructed of four upright poles covered with reeds or branches. These can easily be removed as well as built, and in allusion to their frail and temporary nature, Job compares the insecurity of the godless to them, "he buildeth his house as a booth that the keeper maketh." * Our property and life were in the hands of the watchmen, who might easily betray their trust; this made me lie awake all night to be ready for any emergency. I thought of the strong language in which David expressed his trust in Jehovah as the keeper of his people, and found strength in the truth that He is the keeper of Israel forever. "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." † And in reference to the very custom of appointing a special guard for strangers like ourselves who were passing through the land, it is written, "the Lord preserveth the strangers," ‡ or, as it may be better translated, "Jehovah is the keeper of strangers." He is the keeper of the Gentiles who are not of Jewish blood nor belong to the land of Palestine, for He is Father of all, and in Christ is making His salvation known among all nations.

As we were anxious to leave Jennin early, orders were given for an early breakfast. One of our companions occupied the tent in which the provisions were kept for safety during the night. And as a heavy dew frequently lay on the grass in the early morning, we took breakfast in this tent. Our friend acted with praiseworthy fidelity on the first part of the proverb; "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy,

* Job xxvii. 18.

† Psalm cxxi. 4.

‡ Psalm cxlvi. 9.

wealthy and wise." He retired early enough but refused to rise. The dragoman tried by coaxing and then threatening him to get him out of bed. Alexander then exhausted his stock of broken English, and finally his own patience to no purpose. My friend Mr. Smart, whose persuasive words of kindness would move a stupid Turk even, failed to persuade him to leave his bed. It was useless to point out the fact that the sun had risen, he replied, "that was no reason why he should rise." At length the dragoman, Alexander, and two of our men carried him out of the tent, bed and bedding, and then he lay on his back with his face covered with his bed clothes. The well-meant efforts of everybody, he said, only made him more stubborn, and we might move on without him, for he would not rise yet. Alexander, as a *dernier ressort*, stripped the bed clothes off him and ran with them round the tent. Our friend rose, and in solemn gravity, and with considerable agility gave chase for his blanket, amid the shoutings and applause of our Syrian and Mahomedan muleteers. The sources of the ancient River Kishon are at Jennin. Near our tent a small streamlet only a few inches deep flowed along the edge of a hedge of cactus. After the chase was ended, our friend took his blanket and folded it two or three times and started for the stream. First, he lay on his face, then on his back, for the water was not deep enough to cover his body. He stirred up the black mud of the bottom as if a whale were plunging in the small stream. On finishing his morning ablutions, he came out dripping with black muddy water, and stood on his blanket which he had placed at the edge of the stream and began to dry himself. The lynx-eyed dragoman espied him and ran towards him, cursing in the loudest tones and coarsest Arabic possible. He dragged the blanket suddenly from under the feet of the bather and came within a jot of sending him reeling into the stream backwards. Then he

came rushing towards our tent holding up the blanket from which a stream of dirty water was flowing, and asking what we thought of that. We replied we thought it was a dirty blanket and nothing more, and that he would add to our comfort if he would look after his own duties more and swear less. He withdrew like a timid cur with his tail between his legs, and we left the scene.



EASTERN MODE OF WASHING HANDS.

CHAPTER XVII.

JEZREEL AND THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON.

“The cities lie here very numerously ; and the very many villages there are here are everywhere so full of people, by reason of the richness of the soil, that the very least of them contains alone fifteen thousand inhabitants.”—*Josephus*, B.J. iii. 3, 2.



RIDING out of tent early in the morning, I heard angry discussions behind, which I learned afterward were caused by the watchmen, who were Turkish soldiers, being discontented with their wages, as they have been from earliest times. In the time of John's powerful preaching which made multitudes think of their life and character, among others soldiers came to him, asking what they should do, to whom he replied, "Be content with your wages." This lesson those Turks had yet to earn.

The great plain of Esdraelon extends in the form of a triangle from Bethshean by the Jordan to Tabor and Carmel on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The soil is fertile, and as far as the eye could reach was green with fields of wheat. Luxuriant pasture was to be found over the extensive plain, capable of supporting multitudes of cattle, while the slopes of Gilboa, little Hermon, and Tabor afford splendid browsing for unlimited numbers of sheep and goats. This extensive, level area was the ancient battle field of Palestine. On it some famous battles have been fought, and some of the bloodiest deeds have been done. There too, kingly hopes have been

extinguished in shame and total defeat, and royal families swept from existence. On this field the hosts of Sisera were annihilated. Along the north side of the plain under the shadow were encamped the Midianites, Amalekites, and children of the East, like grasshoppers for multitude. On the south side near Harod, or the Well of Trembling, probably the modern Ain Jalûd, Gideon and his three hundred men who lapped with their hands were encamped, who defeated their enemies and chased them down the plain and across the Jordan. Here, too, the hosts of Israel fought the Philistines in the battle which ended disastrously on Gilboa in the death of Saul and his sons, whose dead bodies were exposed to the gaze and mockery of the Philistines on the walls of Bethshean. At Megiddo Josiah, of Judah, was defeated and slain by Necho, the King of Egypt. Crusaders, with the red cross on their breasts, have fought with fiery zeal kindled by fanaticism, against the hated and bigoted Saracen. Frenchmen and fanatical Turks have encountered each other in mortal struggle on the plain of Esdraelon. Its soil has been trodden by the feet of soldiers, nobles, and kings from many distant lands. The standards of Egypt, Babylon, France, and Turkey have fluttered over it. Its soil has drunk in the blood of the prince and the humble soldier, and it has afforded a common grave of rest to men who in life were deadly foes. On this plain, broken up by Gilboa, little Hermon, and Tabor, into small areas extending eastward to the Jordan, were situated cities of ancient times, around whose names cling memories of valiant deeds, and deeds of human and divine love, and memories of men who impressed their spirit on the life of their time and of all coming times. Among these places of interest are Jezreel, Shunem, Nain, Endor, En-Gannim, Carmel, Nazareth, and Tabor.

We rode northward from Jennin, through fields of wheat,

from which the farmers were pulling up tares, and throwing them out on the foot-path to be trodden under the feet of men and horses. This is the zizanion of St. Mathew, and is called by the inhabitants zawân. It is a species of wild rye or barley. The grains are bitter to the taste and are poisonous, producing convulsions and even causing death when eaten in any quantity. Dr. Thomson says that it is a firm belief among many of the farmers that it is a degenerated wheat, produced by wet seasons. Though in the early stages of its growth it cannot be distinguished from wheat, this is easily done when the grain is forming along the stalk. Men, women, and children, may be seen on all the large wheat-growing areas of Palestine plucking it up by the roots. It of course intertwines its roots round the roots of the wheat so that in plucking it up, it brings wheat stalks with it. These tares are employed by the Divine Teacher to mark the radical difference between good and evil in their nature and origin.* The tares are sown not by God, but by an enemy of God and man, and are fit only to be cast into the fire, while the wheat is to be gathered into the garner of God. The teaching of the Word of God and the figures it employs are verified by experience and true philosophy that good and evil are two realities, eternally distinct in their essence. It is as absurd to say evil is good in the germ or the negative aspect of good, as to say darkness is the germ of light, or death the germ of life. But as the Scripture teaches, in the Divine economy good and evil must grow in the kingdom together until the harvest day of God, when the evil shall be separated from the good by an infallible and mighty hand.

Gilboa, destitute of wood, and barren, rose on our right, extending eastward to the Ghor of Beisan and the valley of the

* Matthew xiii. 24, et seq.

Jordan, and its western spur reached out into the plain as far as the modern Village of Zerin. It towered up like a giant among the lesser elevations round about. This range, like others, was doubtless wooded in former times, but at present is bald and desolate. To this mount Saul and his sons fled after the defeat by the Philistines, whence the head of the fallen king was carried as a trophy whence fastened to the walls of Bethshean. Riding through fields of wheat in a north-westerly direction we reached Jezreel, the modern Zerin, early in the forenoon. It is situated on a spur of Gilboa. Only a few poor houses now occupy the plateau on the top of the hill, which gradually slopes down to the plain, except on the east side, which is precipitous. On the summit is a ruined tower which may have served the crusaders, as the ancient one served the watchman who saw Jehu riding furiously up that plain, as the avenger of the Lord. Excavations have been dug into the limestone hill. These probably were ancient reservoirs for water to supply the citizens in time of siege. Now they are granaries, from which men were lifting up wheat in grass baskets, while the women were sifting it. After the threshing and winnowing process is done, the wheat is usually stored away mixed with dust, fine stones and teben, or crushed straw. The ghurbal, or sieve, is similar to the European ones, in shape and size; this the women of Jazreel filled half full, then sitting down they shook it with considerable force, the small grain and fine stones fell through, they then picked out the larger stones, and the wheat in the sieve was ready for use. The small grains were afterwards sifted in a ghurbal of finer meshes, and nothing is lost. The figurative language of Amos is better understood after having seen the sifting process in Palestine. In speaking of His judgments on Israel, God says, "I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve."* Eastward the

* Amos ix. 9.

Gilboa range descends perpendicularly to the plain, and at its base is Ain Jalûd near which Gideon and his three hundred who lapped like dogs prepared for battle against the Midianites. In Jezreel was Naboth's vineyard which Ahab coveted, probably on the north-east side of the spur on which the city was built. Here the dauntless Elijah met Ahab and told his doom "in the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood,"* and in the pool to the north of the hills doubtless the bloody chariot and sword of the dead king were washed, and the prophecy fulfilled by dogs licking his blood. His son Joram was cast dead into the portion of the field of Naboth, and Jehu slew Jezebel who was thrown out of the palace window and was eaten by dogs. She tried to conquer her foe with her charms, "she painted her face," or as it is literally "she put her eyes in paint." Everywhere in the East, women still follow the custom. Antimony, or according to Dr. Thomson, khol, obtained from burning almond shells or frankincense is used. The substance is applied with a small stick, or a piece of ivory to the eyebrows and eyelashes. Antimony dilates the pupil of the eye and gives it a glassy brightness which is much admired among Orientals. To this custom Jeremiah refers when speaking against Jerusalem: "Though thou enlargeth thine eyes with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair."† The story of Ahab and his house is a warning to covetous men and despots, whether kings, politicians or railway magnates, that if they heap up fortunes at the expense of the people's rights and in violation of justice, the day of vengeance and divine retribution will surely come,

A short distance north-west of Jezreel is Shunem where the great woman had a chamber in which were a bed, table and stool for the prophet. We lunched under the friendly shade of

* 1 Kings xxi. 19. † Jeremiah iv. 30.

orange trees in a garden outside the village. As Nazareth was to be the camping place, our halt at Shunem was short. I rode through the village with its fifty or sixty houses set down in the wildest confusion. Smoke was issuing from a hole in the wall which did service for a door and a chimney. On the roofs were clay beehives, which resembled huge water jars, and immense swarms of bees were busy in the gardens and over the plain. In company with a guide I rode down the plain on which many of the mighty nations of the past had camped, Philistines, Israelites, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. In half an hour we began to ascend Jebel ed Dahy, and descended on the northern slope to Nein, the ancient Nain, at the base of the hill. At the back of the present village, are some rock-hewn tombs, and east of the village but lower down towards the plain are traces of ancient buildings. Our Lord coming from Capernaum would enter Nain on the east side when He met the funeral of the widow's son nigh to the gate. The ruins on the east of the village seem to indicate that ancient Nain was of considerable size, and this would agree with Luke's statement that much people followed the bier. About a dozen men were seated on a low terrace hearing cases and delivering judgment on them. I spoke to them but their reply was far from friendly. My conversation was brief, therefore, I left them to deliberate on their municipal affairs without my disturbing presence. The people soon gathered around us, one of whom I asked if any great prophet had ever been here. "Yes," she replied. "Nebi Jesus." "What did He do in Nain." "He made live the son of a widow." She had heard the story of our Lord's mighty work, but on asking her further about Christ, she said the priest would tell me everything, but I found him as ignorant of the Scriptures as the woman.

A short ride eastward along the base of the hill brought us to Aindûr, Endor, high up on the brow of the hill. The

houses are ancient caves dug out of the mountain, and in a few instances mason work is built in front of the caves, in which sheep are kept over night, and farm implements are stored away. On the face of one or two of the caves that were surrounded with stone walls, I observed some carving almost obliterated, and therefore, cannot say whether it is the work of former times, or rude efforts of the modern Endorites. The Shiekh and all the population, male and female, came out to examine us. In all, they were about one hundred souls. The women and children were all tattooed, the former wore ornaments of silver round the brow and over the crown of the head, in their nose and ears, round their necks, on their arms and ankles. Their face, arms and feet were a mass of blue colouring of various devices, which, together with their huge silver ornaments, their ragged garments and wizzened, wrinkled skin, gave them the appearance of being suitable descendants of that ancient witch who plied her unlawful trade in some of these caves, in the days of Saul.

This custom of tattooing is very old and seems to have been practised in Egypt before the time of Moses. The Israelites were forbidden "to print any marks upon themselves," * in reference to this custom of the heathen. In Exodus we read, however, that the Israelites were to keep in memory their deliverance from the land of Egypt by a sign upon their hands, and a memorial between their eyes.† Dr. Thomson thinks it may have been the figure of the Paschal Lamb. As the Egyptians would probably have upon some part of their body the name or figure of the deity whom they specially worshipped, would it not rather be a name of the true God which the Israelites would have as a sign on their hand and forehead? In the time of Isaiah, reference is again made to this custom.

* Lev. xix. 28. † Exod. xiii. 9.

These tattoo marks are indelible, they cannot be removed. The Lord, to attest that his love for his people is everlasting and can never be removed, says, "Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." * There is an indirect reference to the custom in the New Testament; in the resurrection of the just, when body and soul shall be made perfect in holiness there will be no external image of Christ on the redeemed, no outward mark, no written quotation from God's Word, but soul and body shall be in the likeness of Christ, for "as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

Gold is an object of great admiration to Orientals as well as Canadians, wherever it may be seen. The whole population of Aindûr were gathered about us. The children were feeling the buttons on our coat, and trying to take them off as lawful spoils. These little urchins were in rags, their hair was cut close to the skull except on the crown, where a tuft of woolly hair was left standing, like the bunch of hair in a shoe brush, which gave them a comical appearance. With difficulty I could keep their black paws from slipping into my pockets, for they evidently had no clear perception of the difference between mine and thine. I lectured the shiekh on the importance of training his people in good morals; they laughed at my efforts to teach them, and were hopeful of a handsome bukshish. We were facing the west, and the sun was nearly setting across the Mediterranean Sea. One of my companions had a considerable quantity of gold setting in his teeth on which the rays of the setting sun were reflected. At once a tufted-headed lad spied the gold, he put his brown fingers to my friend's mouth and turning round eagerly and swiftly to a score of his companions with the blacking brush tufts on their

* Isaiah xlix. 16.

heads, cried out lustily in Arabic, "Taâlloo henâ ya awlâd dahab, dahab, dahab" (come here boys, gold, gold, gold), as if he had discovered a gold mine. A sudden rush was made towards my friend to see the wonderful discovery; and, lest their greediness should overcome their judgment and attempt to extract the golden teeth, we paid our bukshish, wished them all "peace," hastened down the hill and over the rich plain and crossed the hills to Nazareth. The white houses of Nazareth on the brow of the hill nestled among vineyards, and gardens of fig and almond trees. The valley is small, but the green foliage and richly coloured blossoms on the trees, the perfect stillness of the evening, the purple and gold in which the setting sun mantled the whole landscape, made Nazareth appear to me an earthly paradise. Reining up my horse, I looked with joy on blessed Nazareth. The city of our Lord's childhood days, doubtless, has perished, but the general outlines of the scenery remain unchanged, and the whole panorama of vale and hill and natural beauty must have appeared to him much the same as they appear now. The first person I met was a Mahommedan engaged in prayer under the shade of a blooming tree. He was facing Mecca and was heedless of our presence. Though he was a fanatical Mahommedan, I was delighted that the first man of the city whom I saw was engaged in prayer. Tradition has located the important scenes in our Lord's life in Nazareth. I have no faith in any of them, for there is not one tittle of evidence in support of them. However, I visited them with the same feeling which I had when I walked along the valley and over the hills behind the city opposite it, namely, that our Lord has walked over these same places and so has made every spot holy ground. Nazareth has never been a city of importance, it is not mentioned by Josephus, though he was familiar with the whole region round about. In our Lord's time it was probably an insignificant

rural village, and notorious for its wickedness. Its present population is about 5,000, and the character of its people, is none of the best. In this quiet spot our Lord grew in wisdom and stature for the coming years of His public life of bitter hatred and cruel sufferings and God-like deeds of mercy. Far from the throng and din of great cities some of the earth's mightiest ones have passed their early youth and manhood, Shakspeare, whose dramas are immortal, and whose thoughts are rich treasure houses for lesser men, Cromwell, who made Britain's name a terror to her foes, and her flag the symbol of freedom and the shield of the downtrodden multitudes in every sphere of human activity.

The Latin Church in Nazareth is situated at the southern part of the town, and on the east side of the one broad street. When I first entered there was service, the people were on their knees on the stone floor, and the organ was pealing forth its sweet solemn tones, which could be heard far down in the valley in the stillness of the evening. Descending a number of steps I reached the chapel of Annunciation, where is the inscription "*Hic Verbum caro factum est*" (here the Word was made flesh). Higher up is a cave in the rock called the Virgin's house, and to the right is a smaller room with arched ceiling called the Virgin's kitchen. They probably were tombs or granaries in the olden times like those of Jezreel. A chapel overlooking the valley further north is pointed out as occupying the site of Joseph's workshop, and in a small side chapel to the left under the altar are the words "*Hic erat subditus illis*" (here He was subject to them). Near the Maronite Church may be seen the limestone slab, the so-called table from which our Lord ate with his disciples. I was not desirous of lingering long in such places, for only the most credulous could venerate them as the sites of the recorded events of our Lord. Greeks, Arabs, Crusaders, and Turks have

devastated the city, so that even the site of ancient Nazareth is uncertain. Ascending the hill on the north-east, then turning to the left I passed the school and orphanage of Miss Dixon and reached the part of the hill overlooking the Maronite Church. Here the face of the hill is precipitous for a distance of about fifty feet to the streets below. This, is the place, according to Dean Stanley, from which the Nazarenes tried to hurl the Lord over "the brow of the hill whereon the city was built."* North and south of this spot are many other spots, over any one of which if a man were thrown he would be killed or badly injured.

It has been suggested that the precipitous hill overlooking Iksal to the south-east of Nazareth would be a much more suitable place, for no man could possibly live if thrown over that hill with its sharp masses of projecting rock. But it is not the same hill on which the city was built, unless Nazareth also occupied the opposite side of the valley, of which there is not the least evidence, besides the furious Nazarenes would not have gone so far, when what suited their purpose was near at hand. The view from the hill behind the city is extensive and includes some of the most noted places in Palestine; westward, Carmel, and Haifa, and the waters of the Great Sea appeared, south-east was the plain of Esdraelon carpeted with the richest green, and broken at intervals by little Hermon, Jezreel and Gilboa; eastward, Tabor is seen, like a prince among the lesser hills; northward, were Kefr Kenna, and Sefurieh the seat of the Jewish Sanhedrim after the downfall of Jerusalem; further north was Hattin, the mount of beatitudes, and beyond, the plain of Huleh, and great Hermon mantled with snow. On this scene our Lord doubtless often looked. In this secluded spot surrounded by hills, and adorned by fertile vale, the Son of man

* Luke iv. 29.

spent the greatest part of His earthly life. This quiet Galilean town was a fit place, in divine wisdom, where amid beautiful scenery and fresh atmosphere he might attain bodily vigour to endure his fatiguing journeys on foot under the intense heat of a Syrian sun. There, he grew in mental power and in the consciousness of his origin and nature. With the exception of one or two brief glances into his early life, God has wiped out all knowledge of His Son until he came forth to His public work. We would ask many questions, but who can answer? The pen of the inspired writer was forbidden to write. At length strong in experience gained in His Galilean home, and strong in the consciousness that he was the Son of God, He went forth to battle against evil and for righteousness. He was equal to the task, he spoiled principalities and powers, and ascended up on high leading captivity captive.

A short ride brought me to Kefr Kenna, which tradition has honoured as the site of Cana of Galilee and the scene of our Lord's first miracle, when he manifested forth his glory. In the poor Greek Church, over the door of which hangs a small bell, supported by rickety props, to call the people to worship, were a few paltry paintings and moth-eaten books, which the priest was anxious to sell me. Against the wall of the church are fastened two large stone jars, about two feet in diameter and three and a-half high. The priest, informed me these were two of the six in which the water was changed into wine. I asked him for his proof, but that was wanting, for he only shook his head in reply. If the firkin was equivalent to the Hebrew "bath" containing seven and a half gallons, each stone would have contained at least fifteen gallons, and there would be at least ninety gallons at the marriage feast. When we remember the customs at an eastern marriage this was not a large quantity, even for a poor family. Friends and neighbours are invited now to marriages in the east, for the custom

is the same as in those early times when Jacob married Rachel. On that occasion Laban "gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast." In the parable of the marriage of the king's son, the servants were commanded, "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage."* There, in that humble village, perhaps, our Lord sanctified by his presence the joyous customs of his countrymen and the divine institution of marriage upon which all that is great in nations and good in family influence depends.

From Kefr Kenna the route lay down a narrow ravine, extending southward. It was wooded with wide-spreading oaks. Along with my guide I passed through an encampment of Arabs and ascended Tabor from the north. I climbed over terrace above terrace, pulling myself up over steep and dangerous places by the branches of stunted shrubs. Meantime my guide was leading the horses up the zig-zag paths. I reached the top on the east side of the mount, masses of ruins were lying about in wild confusion, covered with weeds and thistles. A wall encloses a large area on the top of Tabor, on the south-east side of which is a fosse. The rock on which the wall is built is bevelled, and the lower tiers of stone have a hewn margin and date back at least to the Roman occupation of the country. I walked through a crop of high thistles, pushing them aside with a stick lest there might be lurking some poisonous reptile, and on reaching the Latin Monastery was assailed by fierce dogs, while two lazy fellows looked on at a distance with calm indifference to see which would conquer, myself or the dogs. I found my guide awaiting me and visited the whole summit of Tabor. From it one of the finest views in Palestine is obtained, and it has been itself the theatre of some important events in biblical history. Down this mountain

* Mat. xxii. 9.

Barak and his ten thousand men rushed against Sisera with his chariots of iron, and somewhere along the valley westward by the River Kishon, Jael drove the tent peg through the temples of the defeated captain of Jabin's army. And what the men of Zebulun and Naphtali left unfinished the elements completed, for "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera." "The River Kishon swept them away." Tabor was an important position in those days of continual warfare, and was fortified by Josephus in the war against the Romans, and those old stones in the lowest tiers of the wall and the deep fosses are doubtless the work of Jewish hands, and may be part of the very wall erected by Josephus himself. By a stratagem of Placidus, the Roman general, the Jews were induced to come down to the plain where many were slain, and others finding their retreat cut off fled to Jerusalem.*

Jerome regarded Tabor as the scene of our Lord's transfiguration. He writes, "*Scandebat montem Thabor in quo transfiguratus est Dominus.*" No mountain in all Palestine would be more suitable for such a revelation of His glory, but it does not meet the requirements of the sacred narrative. Jesus took His disciples "up into an high mountain apart by themselves."† There is every reason to believe Tabor was inhabited during the lifetime of Christ, for Josephus speaks of the people using rain water previous to the time he fortified the mountain. The people would occupy only the summit, hence there would be many places high up on the brow of the mount, to which Christ and his disciples might retire and be alone by themselves. It is highly probable the ancient road up the mount was on the west side where the present one is, and on any of the other sides are many suitable spots that would comply with the text.

* Josep. Bell. Jud. iv. 1, 8. † Mark ix. 2.

There is, however, strong probability against Tabor, as the scene of that marvellous display of the divine splendour of Christ. Between the eighth and ninth chapters of St. Mark there is no break in the narrative. In the former he was at Cæsarea Philippi, the modern Banias; in the next chapter we read: "After six days He took his disciples up into an high mountain and was transfigured." It is probable the scene occurred on one of the lesser plateaus of Hermon, which rises up behind Banias. When our Lord came down from the mount He saw a great multitude, and the scribes questioning His disciples. Banias was a city of importance and wealth in our Lord's time, and situated as it was at the base of the hill, He would at once meet with the multitude on his descent from the mountain. The Greek language was spoken, and Pan was the tutelary deity of the place. It was such a city as the proud, hypocritical Pharisees would not desire to dwell in. And it is worthy of notice that only the Scribes are mentioned, the Pharisees, who are usually joined with the Scribes in their hostility to Christ, appear to have been absent. In St. Mark we read, "They departed thence and passed through Galilee," and came to Capernaum.* If they had been on Tabor they were in Galilee, and it would imply either a great amount of ignorance on the part of the writer, or would be useless information to give, to say they passed through Galilee to Capernaum. They could not do anything else, why mention it? It would be as useless as to say that a traveller going from Brockville to Kingston went through Ontario; how else could he go? Cæsarea Philippi was in Ituræa, and the language of Mark agrees with the position of persons outside of Galilee, and our Lord and His disciples going by Dan, along the western side of the plain of Huleh, would reach Capernaum by the old

* Mark ix. 30, et seq.

Roman road and thus would go through Galilee. Hermon, therefore, has the strongest claim for the honour, as the mount on which Christ for a few moments swept away the veil that concealed His true glory as the Son of God.

At five o'clock in the afternoon I descended Tabor with Alexander my guide, and passed through an encampment of Arabs on our way to the sea of Galilee. I asked a monk in the monastery on Tabor if it was safe to pass through this encampment. "Yes," he replied, "safe in daylight, but they are dangerous at night." Alexander was afraid of those wandering shepherds that dwell in tents, and the Greek monk on Tabor advised us to hasten, that we might be far beyond their reach ere the sun went down, for in his opinion to plunder belated travellers was a work of pure pleasure to them. Soon we left Tabor behind us, hurried through the Arab encampment and were far out on the plain. When we were nearly half way to Tiberias, the sun set and thick darkness settled down. As there was no road to help us, we soon found we were lost, an easy matter on Esdraelon, over which only narrow footpaths extend in every direction. For hours we rode onward in the darkness, our horses at one time plunging into mud holes and again stumbling over old ruins of forsaken villages and khans, lairs for wild beasts by day, and fierce Arabs by night. Alexander became greatly excited, lost his head completely, and was in mortal dread of being killed by some wandering fellows on the plain. He asked, "what will we do?" I said, "let us make the horses lie down and we will sleep in the tall grass until morning." After some further plunging, a light appeared in the distance, which Alexander believed came from a village on the north east of Tabor. I replied, "it is a light from the Arab tents and that we should drive to them and ask for hospitality." We turned our horses' heads towards the light. After a time the fires in the Arab tents

became visible, and we could see the men round the fires smoking their pipes, and in the reflected light the sheep and goats were lying round the tents. My guide was in the utmost alarm, and I was uncertain of the reception awaiting us. The warning given by the monk on Mount Tabor, and my own knowledge of wandering Arabs made me feel we were in danger. Alexander mournfully remarked that our death at their hands was among the probabilities of the night. I then said if we had to die, I would like him to go some distance before me, and if he fell I could have a chance of escape. To this proposition he objected most positively. I then rode before him and asked him to follow. At this he took courage and rode ahead. Aided by the darkness we could see the blazing fires in the sheik's tent shining on the dark, wizened faces a dozen armed men. The dogs gave the first alarm of our approach; immediately the sheik and his men rushed after the dogs and towards us, armed with dirks in their belt and their gun in their hands. In a shrill tone the sheik demanded "Who is there?" Alexander in a timid voice replied, "Friends." To which the sheik responded "Friends come in the day, enemies only come in the night." To which Alexander in turn replied, "We come then as guests." A few minutes were spent in consultation, the sheik then approached me, while an Arab held a blazing torch close up to my face and almost singed my hair, and said "dismount." They then led me to the sheik's tent in the centre of the encampment; it was composed of black goats' hair woven by the women of the tribe. The tent was closed at each end and at the back, while the roof sloped down on both sides from a centre pole. The front was open to wind, weather, and animals. A partition separated the women's apartment from the other part, which may be called the general room of the tent. A carpet woven of goats' hair was spread on the ground and I was invited to sit down; fuel was placed on the fire before me,

in a hole in the earth, and about it gathered thirty fierce warriors of the desert. It was long past midnight ; and, as we had tasted no food since the early morning of the previous day, we were ready to eat anything offered us. With true Oriental hospitality of spirit the sheik regretted it was so late or he would kill a sheep or kid for us, but commanded one wife to prepare bread and another coffee. Meanwhile, he was desirous to know about me and my country. I told him I came from Canada. "Is it rich," he asked. "Yes, I replied, it is rich in wood, in fish, and in wheat." "Is it large?" asked the sheik. "Yes, there are pieces of water that would swallow up your whole country, and Jebel Tabariyeh besides." An expression of doubt was visible on their black visages. They then inquired what Sultan or Khedive ruled it. I had to reply that it was a woman who ruled this great country. They then did not conceal their unbelief as to the greatness of Canada, and contempt for the infidels whom a woman governs.

Meanwhile coffee was handed to me, black and bitter, which I drank and handed the cup to the sheik who then drank, and each one of his men in turn, out of the same cup. The embers were removed from the fire, and three cakes about twenty inches in diameter and a quarter of an inch thick were spread out on the hot earth; in a few minutes they were turned and soon were placed before me with a dish of goat's butter. I scooped the butter with my fingers and spread it on the flat cakes; the sheik watched me for a time, and then said, "You do not it rightly." He then told me to roll up the cake in a ball and dip it into the dish of butter and eat it. I preferred our infidel method, however. Such an extemporized meal Sarah prepared for the angels on the plain of Mamre. She made ready quickly three measures of fine meal, and made cakes upon the hearth, and set it before them.* In the parable in St. Luke, of

* Gen. xviii. 6.

the man to whom an unexpected guest came, it is written he besought his neighbour for three loaves.* Such seems to have sufficed for a meal from remotest days. I slept with the horse's saddle for a pillow. On one side I lay stretched out on the grassy floor of the tent, while on the other side the sheik slept after he had dismissed all his men to their own tents. During the night the wind rose and blew into my face clouds of smoke and ashes from the smouldering fire that forced tears from my eyes. At sunrise I was on my feet; outside I met a bright little child of four years old, the son of the sheik. His mother had just awaked him, and was in the act of giving him a drink of water from a wooden spoon with a long handle. He was then set up for the day and went among the sheep which were lying about the tent door. Others were quickly put through the same process, and were ready for the day's frolic at the foot of Tabor. Thus Arab mothers trouble neither themselves nor their children with fancy-dresses, ribbons, shoes, or even washing, an ordeal of terror to many a young soul. Their dress is of the simplest kind, and thus they live in northern Palestine. Before parting, the sheik informed me one of his men was sick, and asked if I had medicine. To satisfy him I visited the man, whom I found to be in the last stage of consumption. I gave him some medicine to break the burning fever, and left some with the sheik to give him, when the fever returned. I commended the poor dying fellow to the Lord, our High Priest, who has compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way. The hospitable sheik refused payment for our lodging. I therefore put a coin in the hand of his child, mounted my horse and rode out of the encampment where I had enjoyed protection and all the care that Arab hospitality could afford.

* Luke xi. 5.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

BY THE SEA OF GALILEE.

“The waves have washed fresh sands upon the shore
Of Galilee ;
But, chiselled in the hill-sides, evermore
Thy paths we see.”

—*The Changed Cross.*



EARLY in the forenoon I reached the top of the hills that overlook the Sea of Galilee, occupying a deep basin six hundred and fifty feet below the level of the ocean. A fresh breeze was blowing from the north-east, and the waves were rolling in furiously to the shore. In such a storm the disciples must have been when their boat was in danger of being swamped, and when in their despair they woke the Lord and He calmed the storm. The sea is about seventeen miles long and seven broad ; along its shores in the days of our Lord were eight or nine cities, now they are in ruins, and a cloud of desolation covers them. Within this small area on the sea shore Christ did some of His mightiest deeds and taught some of His profoundest truths, that will ever remain unfathomable mines into which men and angels may dig. The tent was pitched under the shadow of the wall on the north side of Tiberias. This wall dating back to the crusaders' time, encloses Tiberias on three sides. The population of the city is about four thousand, many of whom are Jews. There is nothing but sentiment to bind them to the town. Hemmed in by mountains, and more

than six hundred feet below the sea level, the atmosphere is extremely hot and enervating, and there is no special industry or means of acquiring wealth. Tiberias was a famous school of Jewish learning after the destruction of Jerusalem. There Hakkodish compiled the Mishna, and some celebrated Rabbis are buried just outside the modern town. It is one of the four sacred cities of the Jews in which prayer must continually be offered, otherwise the world would return to its original chaos, and a tradition of the Jews of the city, is that Messiah will rise out of the Sea of Tiberias and enter the city prior to establishing His kingdom on earth.* According to Josephus the town was built on a graveyard by Herod,† and he had to introduce a Gentile population, for the Jews would be defiled by living in it. Besides, it had been built in imitation of Rome. There was a stadium, and a palace had been erected on which animal figures were carved, which was an offence to the Jews. Our Lord does not seem to have ever been in Tiberias; at least there is no record of it in the evangelists, and the cause may be found in the fact that He accommodated Himself to the prejudice of the Jews, or as a Jew, who fulfilled all righteousness, strictly observed the ceremonial law. There is not much of interest within the walls of modern Tiberias. To the south, as far as the warm baths the coast is strewn with ruins of ancient edifices. May not these be the ruins of the ancient town on which Tiberias is built? It was impossible for it to extend much farther north than the present town, hence it could have extended only on the south. Josephus speaks of Emmaus near Tiberias which may have been the site of the city of Hammath, which extended north to the modern Tiberias, and the graveyard on which Tiberias was built would probably be that belonging to Hammath. There are only three passages

* Smith's Dic. of Bible. † Josep. Ant. xviii. 2. 3.

in the New Testament in which Tiberias is named: John vi. 1-23; xxi. 1. In the other evangelists the sea is known as the Sea of Galilee. However, when the city of Herod rose into wealth and prominence the name of the city was given to the sea, and in this fact, as Dr. Thomson remarks, we may have indirect evidence as to the comparatively late date of the fourth Gospel. The splendour of the court of Herod, the magnificent palace, and the courtiers of the king may have given John the idea of the splendid symbolism of the apocalypse: "A throne was set in heaven and one sat on the throne. The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne and worship him that liveth for ever and ever."* John must have frequently seen the rainbow arching the sea of Galilee with its gorgeous colours from the high hills on the eastern shore, to the table land behind Tiberias. And familiar, as a fisherman, with the sea, he would have beheld it in all its changing moods, at one time lashing the shore with its foaming billows and again calm and clear like a sea of glass. To these natural scenes amid which John spent most of his early life, I think can be traced the origin of the glorious appearance in heaven, "there was a rainbow round about the throne." "And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal."†

We spent Sabbath on the shores of that sea whose waves the Son of God had calmed, and along whose shores the multitudes beheld his sinless life, and listened to his gracious words and were eye witnesses of his majesty. Divine service was conducted in the tent. Passages were read suitable to the occasion. Our tent door faced the sea, whose powerful short waves continued to lash the shore in fury all day long. Time was annihilated, and in imagination I saw Bethsaida, Capernaum, and the

* Rev. iv. 2 10. † Rev. iv. 3, 6.

other cities of early days, which were exalted unto heaven in their privileges of seeing and hearing the Lord. Across this very sea He had often sailed with his disciples to preach the Gospel to the cities and villages in wild regions beyond. Then it was thronged with fishing boats and boats for pleasure belonging to the inhabitants of the cities that then dotted the shore. Now the cities are no more; soldiers, merchants, fishermen, the multitudes are gone. Silence reigns along the whole shore, broken only by the singing of the birds, or the cry of wild animals that prowl among the ruins of those ancient cities. And only two boats could be found whose keels ploughed this famous sea. Towards sundown the wind ceased and the sea became calm. Mr. Smart and myself left the tent and travelled north towards Ain Barideh, and began to climb the mountain which projects its base close to the sea at this place. The climb was arduous, over rough boulders and loose stones. Occasionally the difficulty was increased by rank vegetation and numerous prickly thorns through which we had to force our way. We started two gazelles on the mountain. They abound in wild places on this range of hills that extend along the shores of the sea, and are frequently seen north as far as Cæsarea Philippi. Those we started leaped swiftly from crag to crag and were soon out of sight. They remain in the inaccessible parts of the mountains during the day, and descend to the plain of Gennesaret and the lowlands at night to feed. They have been in Palestine from earliest times, and their fleetness, beauty, and tenderness have been sung by Eastern poets and embodied in legendary tales. "My beloved," says Solomon, "is like a roe or a young hart:" "he feedeth among the lilies."* Habakkuk, expressing his confidence that God would afford him protection from his enemies, says, The Lord

* Song of Solomon ii. 9, 16.

“will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places.”* In the hot season, when the winter torrents are dry, they are forced by thirst to come to the plains for water. Nothing but imperative need could compel these shy, timid creatures to come near the tents or abodes of the people. David had often seen them quenching their burning thirst at the water brooks, and refers to this fact as expressive of his own longing for God. He was desirous of knowing more of God, and of a closer union of heart and life with Him, and to mark the intensity of his desire, he says: “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God.”†

From the tableland we had an extensive view over famous scenes. A short distance west was Hattin, with its elevated peaks at each end of the hill, that give it the appearance of a camel’s saddle. This is the traditional scene of our Lord’s Sermon on the mount, and the feeding of the hungry and wearied thousands. There the famous battle in 1187, A.D. was fought between the Crusaders and Mahommedans, which the latter won; Jerusalem and the whole country were retaken by the conquerors, and the Franks were compelled to abandon all hope of possessing Palestine. Safed, the city on whose summit gave force to our Lord’s teaching, was seen to the north-west. Below us was the sea of Galilee, whose quiet bosom was bathed in the golden sunlight, which contrasted strongly with the barren mountain range on the eastern side, beyond which was the region of Gaulanitis with its famous cities and fearless giants of the olden times; while with one sweep we could embrace within the range of our vision the whole country from mighty Hermon, and the plains of Huleh on the north to the country of the Gadarenes on the south,

* Hab. iii. 19. † Ps. xlii. 1.

including Bethsaida Julias, Chorazin, and Capernaum. Here as in every grand view in Palestine, the historic interest of the places indelibly engraves the scene on the mind of the traveller. A ride of a few minutes along the narrow strip of land between the base of the hills and the sea shore brought me to the site of Dalmanutha, the modern Ain Barideh. A few ruins on the left, at the foot of the hill, are all that remain of the ancient city. On the right is a garden of fig trees and vines, irrigated with water from an old well. Dr. Thomson inclines to the opinion that Dalhamia on the south-east of the sea is the true site. St. Matthew says, our Lord after feeding the four thousand men, took ship and came into the coasts of Magdala,* while St. Mark says He came into the parts of Dalmanutha.† Some writers have regarded Dalmanutha as an error in the text of St. Mark. The language is capable of harmony with St. Matthew, however, without such a theory. In the East every city was, and is even now, the centre of an area owned and cultivated by the citizens. The cities along the sea of Galilee must have been close to each other, and the area belonging to the one would meet that of its neighbour; hence, when our Lord came into the coasts of Magdala, He at the same time would come into the parts of Dalmanutha, if the present site be the true one; and the possibility of harmonizing, naturally, the statements of the Evangelists is a strong presumption in favour of the opinion that Dalmanutha was on the west side of the sea.

A few very poor hovels of clay and unhewn stone are the only remnants of ancient Magdala, the modern Migdel or Watch Tower. A spur of the mountain juts down to the sea at this point, and here begins the plain of Gennesaret. Women and children were gathering dead sticks along the sea shore for

* Matt. xv. 39. † Mark viii. 10.

fuel, and a few men were ploughing with primitive ploughs yoked to living skeletons of oxen. The soil is fertile, shrubs grow in wild profusion, the plain is watered by clear running streams. Oleanders were covered with dense masses of foliage, and the lilies and multitudes of flowers that covered the plain scented the atmosphere with sweetest fragrance. Magdala is associated with the name of Mary Magdalene, out of whom our Lord cast seven devils. The derivations of her name that have been suggested by some of the early fathers are too fanciful to have much weight attached to them. Though the modern village is a most forlorn and wretched place, its site, its poor hovels and its very name will have an interest that will endure as long as Christianity endures, through her who, fearless of danger, stood nigh the dying Saviour on the cross and was the first eye witness of his resurrection.

The plain of Gennesaret extends north for three miles, and inland for about one mile from the shore, in the form of a half circle. Josephus says of this plain, "the soil is so fertile that all sorts of trees can grow upon it; there are palm trees also, fig trees also, and olive trees grow near there. One may call this place the ambition of nature. It is watered from a most fertile fountain. The people of the country call it Capharnaum, it produces the coracin fish as well as that lake does which is near to Alexandria."* Among the cities given to Naphtali was Chinneroth, and in the days of Joshua the sea of Galilee was named the sea of Chinneroth,† the Greek form of which is Gennesaret. This city of Chinneroth may have occupied either the site of Modern Tiberias or stood on the plain of the same name. The Sea of Chinneroth may be derived from the Hebrew word for lyre, and may have obtained its name from the shape of the plain which is not unlike that of the ancient

* Bell. Jud. iii. 10. † Josh. xii. 3.

harp. The plain is well watered, for a number of small streamlets pour their clear waters across it to the sea; the soil is fertile, but there are now no intelligent tillers of the soil, and there are no palm, or fig, or olive trees; it is a desolation, thorns and thistles abound, while oleanders and sweet-scented flowers line the coast of the sea. Nearly midway along the plain, but close to the hills, is Ain Mudowerah, which has been regarded as the fountain of Capharnaum, and I believe the city to have been near this fountain. There are not the faintest traces of such a city as Capernaum on the plain, which seems to have been a fertile, producing area, supplying the citizens along the sea with grapes and figs ten months in the year. At the northern extremity of the plain is Khan Minyeh and the fountain of the fig, Ain-el-Tîny, from which I rode on horseback to Ain Tabigha through an old aqueduct hewn out of the face of the hill, at a considerable elevation above the level of the plain. At Tabigha is a decagonal fountain elevated high enough to convey water along the aqueduct to the northern part of the plain of Gennesaret, also northward to the plain of Tel Hûm. At Tabigha the coracin fish, I believe, is found, and it complies also with the requirements of Josephus, who says that the fountain thoroughly watered the plain. I concur with Dr. Thomson in the opinion that this is the fountain of Capharnaum, and moreover, that Tel Hûm is ancient Capernaum. Scripture testimony is only indirect as to the locality of any of those towns on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. In St. Mark we read that after the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus constrained His disciples to go unto the other side unto Bethsaida, or more correctly towards Bethsaida.* But they came at the same time unto or in the direction of the land of Gennesaret and drew to shore. If their landing place was the

* Mark vi. 45.

one for which they started it might be inferred that Bethsaida was situated on the plain of Gennesaret, perhaps at Khan Minyeh. But St. Mark's language bears only the significance that they were to go in the direction of Bethsaida; and besides, in St. John we read, after the same miracle, the disciples entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum,* where Christ was found the following day in the synagogue. These passages inform us therefore that they crossed towards Bethsaida, which was near to Capernaum and in the direction of the land of Gennesaret. Ain Tabigha contains a fisherman's hut, a mill driven by water from the fountain some distance behind the mill and occupying a much higher level. Five children, the miller, his wife, and servant constitute the entire population. A small streamlet poured its clear waters down to the sea, and small cascades were formed at intervals in its course. The stream was probably six feet broad and six inches deep, at the spot over which I crossed. The miller's wife was giving her youngest child, a boy of three years old, his morning ablution. Standing in the middle of the stream, she took her brown skinned three-year old by the arms and drew him through the running water, after which process he was placed on his feet, and then dried himself in the sun. Shrubs and weeds grew luxuriantly on the mounds of rubbish that marked the sites of ancient houses. This is the traditional site of Bethsaida, the city of Philip, Andrew, and Peter. It signifies the house of fish, and it is a strange fact that the only fisherman along the sea is at Ain Tabigha. Dr. Thomson places the site at the head of the sea, and supposes one part to have been on the west of the Jordan and the other on the east side, named Bethsaida Julias in honour of the daughter of Augustus. After the miracle of feeding the five thousand, the disciples crossed

* John vi. 17.

towards Bethsaida, and St. John says it was in the direction of Capernaum, which Dr. Thomson places at Tel Hûm. If Bethsaida were at the head of the sea on the plain of Butaiha they would not be going in the direction of that city on their way towards Capernaum. Dr. Thomson evidently recognizes this difficulty, and assumes the disciples coasted along the shore past Bethsaida intending to take the Lord in, and go towards Capernaum. But this is an assumption without evidence. Josephus refers in a boastful way to his battle with the Romans in the valley near Julias. He says "I had performed great things that day, if a certain fate had not been my hindrance, for the horse on whose back I fought fell into a quagmire . . . and I was bruised on my wrist, and carried into a village named Caphernome or Caphernaum."* If Bethsaida had been at the head of the sea on the plain, it would have been the natural place to which they would have taken Josephus, rather than two or three miles further south. The indirect testimony of Scripture, and that of Josephus, supported by tradition, support the view that Bethsaida was near the plain of Gennesaret and south of Tell Hûm.

A short ride brought me to Tell Hûm, at times along the edges of ploughed fields and again plunging through deep morasses and over mounds of earth. Close to the sea-shore is a large building, its walls are perhaps fifteen feet high and blackened with age. The stone is marble taken from the hills behind the city, where it is yet found in abundance. It is streaked with reddish veins, like the rock of Mount Zion. Columns, capitals and entablatures were lying prostrate in wild confusion. Some of the pillars were short and thick, forming three-quarters of a circle; a few of them were standing, others had fallen, but their bases were *in situ*. They were

* Jos. Vit. 72.



SHIPS OF THE DESERT.

on the north-west side of the building and appeared to have formed a portico to it. This edifice is certainly Jewish, for there are carved on the entablatures, lying among tall thorns and rank weeds, wreaths of vine leaves and bunches of grapes, also the pot of manna. This was probably a synagogue, and may be the ruins of the very one in which Christ taught the eager multitudes His eternal truth.

Foundations of the houses are visible, perhaps as they stood in the days of our Lord. They are composed of rough, unhewn basalt, for the most part, though I noticed the stone was hewn in the foundations and walls of the larger houses. The ruins extend north and south for more than a mile, and reach a considerable distance inland from the shore. A street of some size extended through the city, parallel with the sea-shore. This was doubtless the straight street found in most ancient cities, and from it diverged narrow ones towards the sea-coast and towards the hill-side of the city. Is this ancient Capernaum? With Dr. Thomson, I believe it is. To Capernaum Josephus was carried, when wounded, from the north, showing, I think, this was the first place of any importance on this part of the sea of Galilee, and there are no ruins of any importance north of Tell Hûm, for those of Chorazin are inland some distance. Capernaum was a city of importance. It had a customs-house, Roman soldiers were stationed there, and it had at least one man of wealth and spirit, who alone built a synagogue. The ruins of Tell Hûm are such as might be expected from a city like Capernaum.

From the walls of the synagogue I could see the whole outline of the ruined city. Within a short distance must have been the home of the centurion whose servant the Lord healed, and Peter's home, whose wife's mother He cured of a fever. Near the shore, somewhere, Peter took the tax-money from the fish's mouth, and on the wild waves opposite these ruins our

Lord walked, about the fourth watch of the night. Malarial fever is one of the prevailing diseases along the plain. There is not and was not drainage in the days of Christ, when the rain falls it percolates partly into the soil, and what remains in the small holes on the surface is evaporated by the intense heat of the sun. As I rode along the plain a heavy vapour was hanging over the land, which would certainly produce fever. In this disease, natural to the locality, there is an incidental and therefore strong witness for the truth of the Gospel narrative in regard to the miracle of Christ. How great were the privileges of Capernaum! It saw signs, wonders and mighty deeds, but its grandest privilege was to be eye-witness of the sinless life of the Great Worker. Its citizens were highly exalted, but they knew not the day of their visitation. The doom uttered by Christ has fallen on the city: "Thou Capernaum which art exalted unto heaven shalt be brought down to hell." In that city were laid the foundations of the Kingdom of Christ, which is spreading over the world. He often trod those very spots over which I walked. I was filled with emotion. He had sailed and walked on that sea, whose waters gently laved the sandy beach, but there were no fishermen, no multitudes, as in the days of Christ. All was hushed in the silence of death. Often had He spent quiet hours, up those remote wadies and on the solitary places on the hills in prayer. His presence has made to the Christian those ruins, that sea, and those rugged hills that hem in the sea on the east and sweep along the western shores, forever holy. Who could stand unmoved in soul, amid scenes that call up memories of the Lord and His mighty works? Capernaum abused the mercy of God. She had light, but preferred darkness. She possessed the Son of God, but she loved him not. She now sits in awful desolation, for the judgment of God rests on her. She is fallen from her glory, and her heaps of ruins and foundations of once great

houses, now the lairs of wild beasts and deadly reptiles, tell the world that not only the nation, but the city and the soul that will not serve God, shall be utterly wasted.

It was only by the joint influence of promises, threats and coaxing, that I could persuade my muleteer to go north to the plain of Butaiha and over to Bethsaida Julias. Finally he agreed to go with me if I would guarantee to pay for the horses if the Arabs stole them, or if they were lost in the quagmires. I agreed to the terms and rode north of Tell Hûm, fording narrow streams, guiding my horse along the edge of ploughed fields and at times urging him to leap over large boulders that covered the ground. About two miles north of Tell Hûm are the ruins of Khorasy, according to Dr. Thomson, ancient Chorazin, verifying out of its utter destruction the words of Christ. A sandy beach extends along the shore, on which had been washed up multitudes of shells, among which the slender and graceful unio predominates. On approaching the head of the sea a sharp bend to the left was made and we rode along the base of the hills, for the plain was spongy and dangerous to travel. Occasionally our path was blocked by masses of fallen rock, or by deep pits full of water. To attempt to pass round these was dangerous, and to plunge into them was equally so. We chose the latter course, and in faith I urged my horse into a large hole of black, muddy water and reached the other side on solid ground safely, but bespattered with black soil from hat to boots. My friend, Mr. Smart, was more successful and, after plunging through these dangerous holes, found himself on solid ground, with little damage to his outer man. Behind us came the muleteer, a stout and short Mahomedan, riding on a donkey, which also carried two bags of provisions swung across his back. The muleteer had been grumbling, and cursing me all the road from Tell Hûm, and when he reached the great slough of despond through which

we had passed, I felt that he had reached the Rubicon. I was in terror that he would turn back and leave us to our fate among a treacherous encampment of Arabs, whose tents were within a mile of us. I encouraged him and gave him advice, to all of which he was oblivious, for, with the fatalistic belief of an Oriental that what occurs is the will of Allah, and we must submit, he plunged headlong into the pit. In a moment the donkey disappeared, with the two bags on his back, and as for the rider only the upper part of his blue jacket and turban were visible. The muddy water was troubled and agitated as if some sea monsters were in deadly combat below the surface. We were in a position to appreciate Josephus' boast of doing great things in this very place over eighteen centuries ago, had his horse not fallen into some such pit and bruised the rider's wrist and blighted his prospects of soiling the Roman eagle in the black mud of Butaiha. He says: "I had performed great things that day, if a certain fate had not been my hindrance; for the horse upon which I rode, and upon whose back I fought, fell into a quagmire." That drenching in the filth of the quagmire doubtless extinguished the prospect of annihilating the Roman army, and tamed his martial ardour. In a moment the donkey's head rose to the surface and then the muleteer appeared, covered from head to feet with mud and water. His turban was destroyed, and his fancy outer garment was soiled and had lost its beauty. He had a most mournful expression on his face, as if death had robbed him of all his friends, and marauding tribes had robbed him of all his property. The donkey seemed equally mournful, and both cut a ridiculous figure. Finally, after much shouting and pulling, we rescued both of them.

The site of Bethsaida Julias is about two miles from the head of the sea on the east of the Jordan. A comparison of St. Mark vi. with St. Matthew xiv., St. Luke ix. and St.

John vi. will lead the reader to conclude there were two Bethsaidas. In St. Luke the scene of the miracle was near the city called Bethsaida, and after the miracle in the other Evangelists we read the disciples crossed the sea towards Bethsaida. The term "called" applied to the scene of the miracles would seem to hint that it was a different place from Bethsaida on the west. Otherwise why should the term be applied to that place, for if there were only one Bethsaida what other name could it bear? There the Lord fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. Josephus says, "Philip advanced Bethsaida, situated at the Lake of Genesareth, unto the dignity of a city, and called it by the name of Julias."* Now the Tell is covered with grass. Traces of terraces and ruins are visible, but it could never have been very wealthy or powerful in its palmyest days. Behind it, and to the north and south, stretched bleak and desolate hills which give to the site of Bethsaida the appearance of being in a desert place; and up any of the wild ravines that stretch inland from the plain or on any of the barren spurs of the mountain range that bounds the eastern side of the plains of Butaiha would be suitable places for the scene of the feeding of the five thousand. We forded the Jordan on the plain eight times, and then rode up the narrow gorge through which that strange river dashes down to the sea. The Jordan rushes over ledges and masses of basalt, foaming and roaring as it lashes against the opposing obstacles in its way. On reaching the plateau on the west a magnificent panorama lay before us. Eastward lay Gaulanitis, undulating with small, barren hills, some of which are supposed to be the craters of extinct volcanoes. This is the land of Bashan, the ruins of whose cities are the admiration of every traveller. Here are the sites of the

* Josep. Ant. xviii. 2, 1.

famous cities of Bozrah and Salcah, upon whom the judgment of God has descended, and somewhere in that region Job the rich Emir lived, in the land of Uz, who feared God and eschewed evil. The white foam of the River Jordan contrasted beautifully with the rich green of the wild fig trees and the rich masses of gorgeous flowers on the oleanders, and far down we could see the tents of the roaming Arabs whose plundering hands we had escaped. Westward and northward stretched the fertile plains of Huleh. Our muleteer had never been so far as Butaiha before. He was, therefore, ignorant of the route we should take. As the plain was quite spongy in the early spring, after the rains, we were forced to keep to the narrow beaten path. A large encampment of Arabs was situated on the eastern side of the plain. They cultivate patches of the soil and eke out a scanty living by other and questionable methods. A few women and young men came over and looked on with complacency at our misfortunes in the mud holes, and would not put out a finger to help us or our horses. After much coaxing and promising of bukshish a young lad agreed to guide us, but a wizzened vixen lifted her finger and threatened him with all the pains of this life and penalties of the next if he would guide us. The lad treated us then with haughty insolence. We became independent and drove on, fording branches of the Jordan that expands here into a number of streams, like the ribs of a fan. Then we began to climb the hillsides, steering our way up narrow foot-paths only to find ourselves confronted with huge boulders over which it was utterly impossible to pass. There was no alternative but to retrace our steps. After various repetitions of this useless work I concluded we ought to make friendly overtures to the Arabs, who from their tent doors were watching us and enjoying our defeat. After much conversation and agreeing to submit to their extortionate demands, we employed

two fierce-looking fellows, one of whom was destitute of clothing except the scantiest covering round his loins and a leather belt, in which he had all manner of dirks and weapons of war. We rode for miles up the narrow gorge through which the Jordan rushes swiftly, then we began to climb the rugged hills, whose shoulders were covered with wild fig and other trees, and here and there were small level areas, on whose rich grass, camels and goats were feeding. On reaching the tableland we continued our journey in a north-westerly direction. Towards sundown we passed bands of Arabs and Syrians returning from their labour in the fields to their tents that were scattered over the plains of Huleh. We paid our guides, who returned to their black tents by the Sea of Galilee while we hastened on our journey. Thick darkness settled down, and we had to grope our way with the utmost caution. To add to our trials the night air became quite chilly, and after the heat of the day and the fatigue and long fasting to which we were subjected, the cold penetrated us through and through. Fording streams and plunging into soft places, often quite suddenly and without warning, kept us on the alert for at least two hours. When we saw the light shining from our tent door, in the distance, it gave us courage. On dismounting we found ourselves stiff and sore, and with difficulty able to walk. We soon learned that our friends, who had come by a different route, had fallen upon hard places as well as ourselves. They were companions in tribulation. But after refreshment and rest we forgot our labours and dangers.

The plain of Huleh, hemmed in on the west and east by great hills, is one of the famous battle fields of the world, and on it many deeds of bravery have been done and many terrible scenes has it witnessed. I rode close to the western hills; on my right was the low-lying Huleh, five or six miles long, with its edges covered with reeds and abounding with water fowl.

The fields were green with wheat. At intervals along the plain were Arabs who cultivate the plain. They occupy huts of the tall reed from the lake, and are despisers of Europeans, the sworn enemies of water and clothing, and were fierce in their demands for bukshish. On the very earliest pages of history we read Abraham with his three hundred and eighteen servants pursued Chedorlaomer and his confederates over this plain to Dan, and over the shoulders of snowy Hermon to the rich plain of Damascus, and returned with Lot and his goods in triumph. Long centuries after that occurrence, Jabin, king of Hazor, assembled the Canaanites on the plain by the waters of Merom "as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude with horses and chariots very many."* But their numbers and strength were of no avail against the purpose of the Almighty. They fled in confusion westward and eastward and northward before the victorious Israelites. Now, ruins mark the sites of old Canaanitish cities, and Arabs lurk in every out-of-the-way place. Cities and men now are in dust, and I felt it difficult to realize the stirring scenes and tragic events that had been enacted in former days on this fertile plain.

Crossing the head of the Leddan we rode south and camped under an ancient oak at Dan, the more ancient Laish and the modern Tell-el-Kady. The site seems to be the crater of an extinct volcano, and is about half-a mile in diameter and from forty to sixty feet high. The surface is depressed in the centre, so that it has the appearance of a huge saucer. It is covered with masses of basalt, hewn and unhewn, that may have belonged to houses or temples in the time of Abraham or Joshua. On the south-west side I observed terraces, and some large stones *in situ* near the base of the hill, that appeared to be the foundation of a wall that may have enclosed the hill

* Joshua xi. 4.

for protection in early times. Water springs out from the Tell on the west side into a pool, surrounded by wild fig trees, reeds and shrubs. There the Leddan begins its career, a stream about twenty feet broad and one of the main sources of the Jordan. The original inhabitants of Laish were, perhaps, emigrants from Zidon, "they dwelt careless after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure." The five Danites came to Laish, and then reported to their brethren, "we have seen the land and, behold, it is very good." * Then six hundred men, with weapons of war, came north and smote the people with the edge of the sword, and built the city of Dan. After the division of the kingdom Jeroboam set up a golden calf at Dan, and it became the centre of idolatry in the northern part of the kingdom. And the hewn stones lying on the south of the Tell overlooking the river may have been part of the heathen temple, and now are witnesses of the truth that idols and idolatry cannot endure before the march of God's truth. Israel in the pride of their heart, in defiance of Jehovah, who commanded them: "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me," and thankless for what God had done for their ancestors and for themselves, "set them up images and groves in every high hill, and there they burned incense in all the high places as did the heathen." † Dan continued to be the high place of the idolatry of Israel until the King of Assyria took the people captives and placed them in Halah and in Habor, and in the cities of the Medes. The city has been razed to its foundations and shrubs and rank weeds cover the site of this ancient place of renown. We lunched under the shade of two immense trees on the south side of the Tell, from which we could see the clear water rushing down to join the other sources of the Jordan, as it has done since the days of Joshua and Jeroboam, an emblem of

* Judges xviii. 9. † 2 Kings xvii. 10, 11.

the eternity of the truth of God, while the images and the temples and the groves have all perished from Dan. So shall false theories perish and the ages shall try the faith of nations and men, and out of the ordeal shall come unshaken the fact that the word of the Lord endureth forever.

Our route from Dan, northward, lay over an undulating country, parts of which were very fertile, and capable of sustaining a dense population. We crossed the Baniasy by a bridge in a very tumble-down condition, which very impressively reminded me of the possibility of a sudden collapse into the roaring waters below. However, it bore us safely. We began to ascend gradually, until we reached the plateau on which Banias is situated. At intervals thorny shrubs grew abundantly on the light sandy soil, and the myrtle whose white fragrant blossoms scented the air. Isaiah, when speaking of the Gospel age, represents the holiness of the people of God by the beauty and fragrance of the myrtle tree. Instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree. In the vision of Zechariah, he saw "a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom."* The myrtle seems to have grown on the Mount of Olives in early times, and would naturally be found low down, where the soil would be more abundant and of a richer quality, just above the bed of the Kedron, where the Jewish tombs are, and near Gethsemane. If the man on the red horse denotes the Saviour, the myrtle trees may then denote his people, who are precious in his sight and beloved as the myrtle. They are in the bottom as indicating the degraded national and moral condition of the Jews. But His love was so intense that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." "He humbled himself," and came "to save the lost."

* Zech. i. 8.

Banias was reached early in the afternoon. Near the village were broken columns half buried in the sand and in the low walls that enclosed some gardens, and on our right traces of an old Roman road were visible. We crossed again the Baniasy, whose waters were rushing down impetuously to the lake Huleh. On the right stood a tower, some of the stones of which were probably of the Roman period. Northward rose mighty Hermon, eight or nine thousand feet, above the sea and the snow on its lofty peaks glittered in the sunlight, as if it were a lingering glory of that divine brightness that surrounded the Lord eighteen centuries ago. At the base of Hermon, surrounded by trees of sweet fragrance and richest foliage, Banias is situated. The beautiful Baniasy flows through it, and the soil is very fertile. The side of Hermon facing the village is perpendicular, in which there is a cavern containing a spring. Over this cave a temple was built to Pan, the god of flocks and pastures, hence the city was called Panium, but as the modern Syrians find it easier to pronounce B than P it is now named Banias. Along the face of the mountain are numerous recesses with Greek inscriptions much weather-beaten, and which will in a short time be entirely effaced. The ruins testify that it was a place of considerable extent and was adorned with costly structures. For luxurious princes and emperors it afforded a pleasant retreat, where they might find a welcome variety of amusement to their over-satiated body and mind. Josephus says Herod, after conducting Cæsar to the sea, "built him a most beautiful temple, of the whitest stone near the place called Panium. This is a very fine cave in the mountain, under which there is a great cavity in the earth." *

There are fifty or sixty houses in modern Banias, composed

* Jos. Ant. xv. 10, 3.

of clay intermingled with unhewn stone and pieces of ancient columns. On the flat roofs booths of reeds and of branches of orange trees were erected, in which the citizens were spending their evenings far from the stir and toil of populous cities. In the centre of the town is a square area, where the shops are situated. I visited the chief one, a room about twelve feet square, with a ceiling six feet high. The whole stock on hand consisted of a dry gourd, a few native purses, and some pots of sour milk. Trade was not rushing, and fortunes must be



CÆSAREA PHILIPPI.

made slowly in Banias, but the people were satisfied, and contentment in any condition is great gain.

To the north of the town are olive groves and pasture ground. At this part of the town are some ruins, over which, in company with Mr. J. Smart, I walked on the flat roofs. Stepping from roof to roof we were enjoying the scene, unconscious of danger. Suddenly a band of fierce dogs assailed us on the right and left, in the front and rear. As we were

intruders and in the minority, we beat a hasty retreat for safety, leaving a piece of our trowsers in the mouth of one dog, thankful that he had not taken a deeper hold.

This was the most northerly town our Lord seems to have visited, and on his descent from one of those elevated plateaus, now green with luxuriant vegetation and covered with shrubs, he cured the dumb boy. After the downfall of Jerusalem, Titus came to Cæsarea Philippi, and gave a number of gladiatorial shows. There he slew multitudes of the Jewish captives taken in Jerusalem to gratify the savage and blood thirsty natures of the Roman spectators, for it and other cities were then doubtless occupied by Romans to whom such brutal spectacles would give unbounded pleasure. The situation of Banias is one of romantic beauty. The Baniasy flows through the village, and in the stillness of the evening it is extremely pleasant to sit on the house-tops amid leafy booths and listen to the gentle murmurings of the water flowing down towards the plain. Shrubs grow with tropical luxuriance, and large trees are numerous, whose wide-spreading branches afford a pleasant shade. Southward are scenes in the valley and on the mountains famous in the early days of Bible story. Behind towers up Hermon in all the awful sublimity that massiveness and height can give, and upon whose lower elevations temples and fortresses have been built by the Baal worshippers in the land, prior to the days of Joshua. Moreover, the very soil on which the village is built has been made holy by the presence of the Son of God. The spot is one of surpassing loveliness, and famous in the pages of history and by the presence and works of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XIX.

OVER HERMON TO DAMASCUS AND THE RUINS OF BAALBEK.

“The north and the south thou hast created them : Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.”—*Ps. lxxxix. 12.*



IRODE over the rising ground behind Banias, up which Jesus may have walked to some of those elevations, where He was transfigured before His disciples. Soon Banias with its natural scenery, its heathen caves, columns and inscriptions, was left behind. A narrow path cut out of the mountain leads up to Subeibeh, the most famous ruined castle in Palestine. Up that same path Canaanites, Jews, Romans, Saracens and Crusaders may have driven. The horses' hoofs have worn holes six inches deep, and the shape of the hoof, into the solid rock. The whole summit of a spur of Hermon is occupied by this tower, which is about one thousand feet long, three hundred wide, and stands at an elevation of one thousand feet above the plain. Towers occupy the corners, and arched openings overlook the plain on the south side. The lower tiers of stone are evidently of great antiquity, and at places the rock is bevelled on which the wall is built. There is one peculiarity about the gate leading to this tower. Near the base, on both sides, are slots or grooves, and it is quite probable, as Dr. Robinson supposes, that the gates were lifted up by mechanical or human power. There are no sockets in the stone on which the pivot

of the door might swing, which confirms the theory. It is probable that ancient doors were so constructed. Perhaps the royal gate leading into the temple area, or into the temple itself may have so opened and closed, and when David entered to worship Jehovah, it would be lifted up by the temple servants. In the xxiv. Psalm he represents Christ as a royal conqueror, ascending into the heavenly temple leading captivity captive, and the inhabitants of heaven cry, as the Lord who has triumphed over death and hell ascends to His throne, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." It has been supposed that this is the site of Baal-Hermom, occupied by some of the original tribes of the country. If so, Subeibeh may have been both a fortress and temple under the protection of Baal, but the passage in Chronicles seems to make Baal-Hermon and Mount Hermon different places, unless we translate the Hebrew conjunction before Hermon, "even." Then the passage would read, "They increased from Bashan unto Baal-Hermon and Senir, even unto Mount Hermon."*

Arches of all shapes and sizes tell of the different races who have in turn held possession of this stronghold. Caverns, massive cisterns, and old stairways meet us at every step. I saw no inscriptions nor the least trace of the language of the ancient Phœnicians who may have laid the foundations that are as firmly fixed in their place to-day as when laid there by those ancient workmen. Everywhere are Arabic inscriptions of little interest. The view from this lofty temple-fortress is the finest in all northern Palestine. Northward, westward and southward, one can look over extensive valleys clothed in rich verdure, where industry would be rewarded with abundance, and where under a just and paternal govern-

* 1 Chron. v. 23.

ment multitudes could spend a useful and contented life. At intervals the valleys are broken by mountain ranges or isolated hills, while north, rises peak above peak of mighty Hermon until its snowy summit pierces the blue skies thousands of feet above Subeibeh. The scene is one of great beauty and terrible grandeur, and brings unconsciously to our lips the words, "Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty." It rained incessantly from early morning; the black clouds that wreathed the summit of Hermon came sweeping down the gorges of the mountain and poured out their floods upon us. We sought shelter for some hours under the arches or in some of the rooms that yet remain perfect since the days of the crusaders. A few wretched men and boys were making charcoal, and we huddled round their fires, but the smoke was stronger than the heat, for however pleasant the latter, the former was very unpleasant. We were obliged to hasten into the fresh air to escape suffocation and find relief for our eyes which were shedding copious tears.

Our route lay over the eastern shoulder of Hermon. The higher we ascended the lower the mercury descended in the thermometer, and a steady, furious wind rushing down the deep gorge drove the rain and cutting sleet into our face. The path was rough and slippery and the horse I rode refused to go further. Along with Mr. Smart and our guide, I turned my back to the storm, and drenched to the skin, hoped that the fury of the wind and the pelting sleet would soon abate. It continued, however, to our dismay, with unabated wildness, and we rode forward with the lofty peaks of Jebel-esh-Sheik high above us, wrapped in snow and rain clouds. The village of Migdol-es-Shemsh was reached at noon, and we were thankful for the shelter of a Druse house. There were two rooms, in the inner one of which was a fire on the earth floor. A few rough stones in the centre of the room constituted the fire-

place. On this was piled up, dry brush which crackled and threw out a profusion of sparks, while the flames mounted to the ceiling as each fresh handful of fuel was thrown on, and cast a lurid hue on the walls, rafters and floor. Mr. Smart, the writer, and our guides huddled round the fire. Soon our pants and coats threw off clouds of steam which amused the Druse children who swarmed about us. Lunch was spread on the earthen floor close to the primitive fireplace, across which one of our company stood with outstretched legs. The clouds of smoke brought tears to his eyes and the flames took hold of his trousers, which forced him to descend unceremoniously from his place of eminence. The interior of the house had been whitewashed in some remote period of its existence: now it was black as ebony. As for furniture, it consisted of an old box on which I sat, and a few old pots and pans. Along one side of the wall, three feet from the floor, were built beds of rough boards, tier above tier like the bunks of a ship. Over these was spread a small mat, and above the beds were square holes in the walls into which odds and ends were stuffed. As there was no outlet for the smoke except through the door, which was closed to keep out the pelting rain, both rooms were soon filled, and we all began to shed tears, and were nearly suffocated. This seems to have been the ancient style of house and fireplace, for, says Solomon, "as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him." Bukshish was distributed liberally to old and young, and all seemed in high glee. Mr. Smart and one guide went on, meanwhile, the other had to go back a mile to search for a lost article of clothing. I intended to await in the house his return. I soon saw I was in danger. Three generations lived in the house, all of whom gathered round me. The son of the old patriarch was a powerful man, his frame indicated great physical strength, his face wore a fierce expression, he had lost

some of his fingers in war, and deep scars disfigured his face. He took hold of me, and attempted to thrust his hand into my breast pocket. It was a critical position, but I had no desire to be plundered, and less to be wounded; I at once showed them that I was prepared to defend myself, also meanwhile I gradually moved backwards towards the door, forcing my way through the circle that formed around me. A few steps led from the door to the ground where my horse stood saddled. Outside they became violent, the women and children joining in the fray. The same man made a second attack, but as he saw I was prepared to defend myself he drew back a step. To remove temptation and ensure my safety, I leaped on my horse and galloped away amid torrents of rain and curses from male and female Druses, with such an impression of the scene graven on my mind as will never be effaced.

Higher and higher we rode until the line of snow was reached, then the route lay over the craters of extinct volcanoes. Masses of lava and black stone lay in the way, over which the horses stepped slowly and cautiously. Soon we began to descend through narrow gorges full of water, rushing down over loose stones, that made riding on horseback dangerous in the extreme. Finally Bet Jenn was reached, near which flows the Jennani, one of the tributaries of the ancient Pharpar. The river was swollen, and flowing with great force. Fording was the only method of crossing. Some coaxing was required before our horses would enter, but facing them up stream, to give them more resisting power, we plunged in. The water was only a few inches below the horses' back. We were all soaking with wet, and our teeth were chattering with cold and exposure in our journey across Mount Hermon. We were thankful when we crossed the Jennani safely and reached our tent. A fierce gale began to blow; it was difficult to get fire; our clothes were wet, and those in the bags

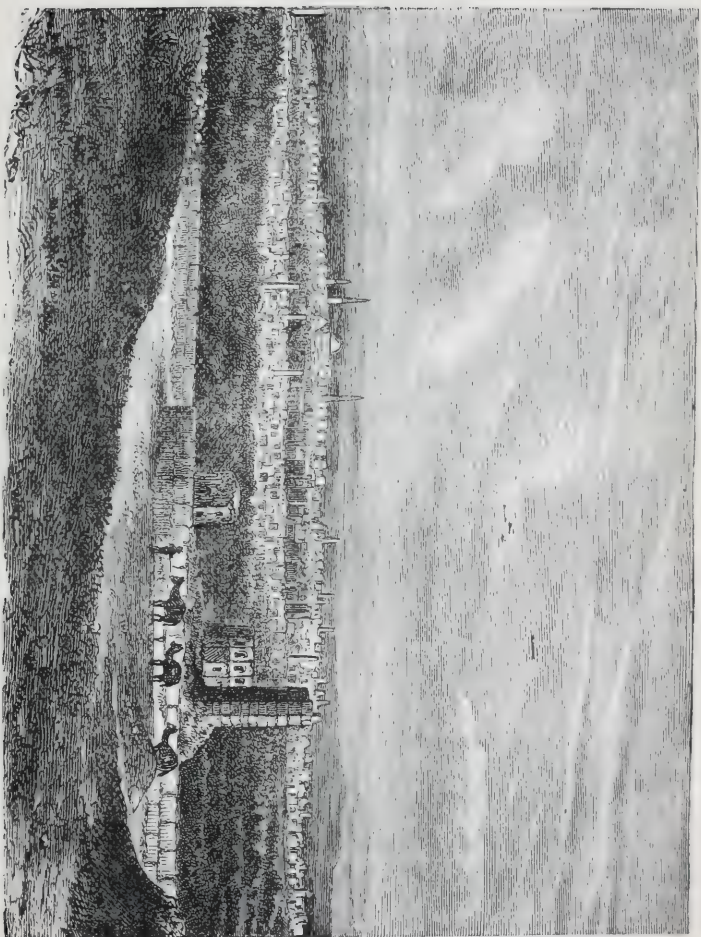
were as bad as those on our body. The condition was not cheering. I sent a pair of boots to the cook to dry. In an hour they were returned with the uppers burned, shrivelled and twisted out of all shape, so that I could only succeed in getting my toes into them. Meanwhile the violence of the storm increased, and sweeping down the deep gorges of Hermon, broke the tent and threatened us all with complete ruin. In fording the swollen rivers of Palestine one sees more clearly the force of David's language in which he often expressed his own danger and that of the nation: "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side. . . . The waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul." * And in life's trials and in the struggle with the last enemy, which is death, the promise of God's presence and aid is given in figurative and powerful language, which one can fully understand, who has forded those swollen rivers: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."†

For miles before reaching Damascus, domes and graceful minarets were seen in the clear blue sky. Behind was Hermon, on the south-east were the undulating barren hills that separate the Haurân from the plain of Damascus, while on the north-west stretched the Anti-Lebanon range. The plain is very fertile, and fields of grain were seen far as the eye could reach. As I came nearer to the city, the wind wafted the fragrance of blooming trees and shrubs from the numberless gardens that covered the plain. I entered Damascus on the south-west, riding along one of the branches of the Abana, whose water is clear and sweet. This river and the Pharpar which I crossed during the day, in the opinion of Naaman, "were better than all the waters of Israel."

* Ps. cxxiv. 1, 4. † Is. xliii. 2.

From the limestone mountain range behind Damascus the vast plain appears in all its beauty, extending from the base of Hermon, northward, towards Palmyra, and to the barren range that hems in the Haurân. The two ancient rivers water the plain by a network of artificial channels that flow in every direction. The plain is an oasis of unsurpassed fertility ; fields of grain are seen waving in the gentle breeze for miles on every side, interspersed with gardens of apricots, figs, citrons, and pomegranates, while here and there a graceful palm tree is seen towering over all. In the centre of all this scene stands the city of graceful minarets and white houses. It appears like a fairy scene in an enchanted land. In the Assyrian inscriptions the city is called Dimaski, evidently the same as the modern Arabic "Dimashk" which signifies activity. Josephus says it was founded by Uz, the grandson of Shem. Eliezer, Abraham's servant, was of Damascus, and tradition declares the patriarch to have been king of this city. It is probable therefore that the city may have been founded originally by a Semitic people. Its great antiquity, and its connection with the history of the kings of Israel and Judah, and its connection with important events that have made their power felt, even until now, make Damascus an object of interest to every traveller. On the threshold of Genesis we find Abraham defeating the confederate kings at Hobah, on the left of Damascus. Ahaz appealed for aid to Tiglath-Pileser, King of Assyria, against the united forces of the northern kingdom. Damascus was destroyed, and the people carried into captivity, and Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled, that Damascus should be "taken away from being a city, and should be a ruinous heap."* Near this city Saul, when on his mission of bigotted persecution, saw the light from heaven, above the

* Isaiah xvii. 1.



DAMASCUS.

brightness of the sun, and heard the voice, and became a chosen vessel of God to carry his truth before Gentiles and kings. Greeks, Romans, Arabs and Turks, have had possession of it. There is nothing of historic interest about the modern city except the massacre of Christians in 1860. The Druses from the hills, the ever fanatical Mahommedans of the city, aided by the Turkish garrison made a sudden attack on the unoffending Christians. The foreign consulates were burned, except the British and Prussian, which formed refuges for hundreds. Six thousand, at least, are said to have perished during those terrible days, their bodies lay in heaps in the narrow streets, spreading pestilence in the heat of the July sun. The Rev. J. Crawford, missionary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, who gave me the history of the brutal attack, narrowly escaped death himself while the clergyman who occupied the next house perished. Those were days of terror, the memory of which will never be effaced from the mind of those who escaped from that scene of carnage.

The so-called sites of the house of Judas, in which Saul lodged, and that of Ananias, are mere guesses, with no evidence to support them, and therefore I felt no interest in them. Is the street called Straight on which the house of Judas was situated yet in existence? The only street which approaches a straight line extends from Bab-esh-Sherki on the east, through Suk-el-Jakmak to the western wall, for about one mile. It was the custom in ancient times to have one colonnaded street extending through the centre of the cities. At the eastern gate and at intervals along this street broken columns are yet seen, some of them having been built into the walls of the houses. And in an intensely oriental city like Damascus, notwithstanding the numerous sieges it has sustained, it is highly probable these mark the location of the street in which the future apostle to the Gentiles lodged and prayed, and where Ananias visited him.

As we were riding on horseback through the bazaars on this straight street, an accident occurred which caused us serious trouble, and almost involved us in danger. A gentleman with us was riding a restive animal, which required care and caution to manage. These qualities the rider did not possess. He seemed oblivious to the presence of men, women, or children, and on two or three occasions almost rode over some young Mahommedans. We were standing at a shop in the silk bazaar, buying some small articles, when suddenly the horse, on which our friend was seated, backed into a shop, broke down the mastaba, destroyed some goods, and wounded some Mahommedan women, who were making purchases. The women ran yelling and gesticulating through the crowded bazaar, while men gathered in large numbers from every quarter. It was a long time and a work of much difficulty to restore them to their normal state of solemn quiet. Our friend paid for the damage and we rode away, glad to escape without suffering personal violence.

On the south side near an old gate, now closed, is the traditional spot where the apostle was let down in a basket and escaped the fury of the Jews. This circumstance is known only from one of his epistles, written some years after his conversion. A historic fact is stated incidentally which adds weight to the truthfulness of the Scriptures. He writes: "In Damascus the governor under Aretas, the king, kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me."* Damascus under the first two emperors belonged to the province of Syria. It was thought by those who are always seeking to detect errors in the Scriptures that it was untrue that an Arab sheik like Aretas should hold Damascus in defiance of the Roman Empire. Paul, however, has been proved

* 2 Corinth. xi. 32.]

correct and his opponents wrong. Herod Antipas was married to the daughter of this Aretas, whom Josephus calls King of Arabia. He divorced her, and she returned to her father at Machærus. This became the cause of war, in which Herod's forces were defeated. Herod appealed to Tiberius, who sent Vitellius to his aid. After landing in Jerusalem he received information of the death of Tiberius, and no further action seems to have been taken against Aretas. Caligula the successor to the Roman purple made changes in the East, and probably granted Aretas, Damascus.* During the period which he held it, the occurrence related by Paul took place.

The Great Mosque, in the north-west of Damascus, is an edifice of profound interest. It is four hundred and thirty-one feet long by one hundred and twenty-five broad, exclusive of the outer court, whose arches are supported by old pillars of granite, marble and limestone, many of them bound by iron clamps. The interior is divided into three aisles by Corinthian columns; the lower parts of the walls are lined with coloured marble, the upper parts with mosaics representing various Scriptural scenes. This is probably the site of the Temple of Rimmon, in which Naaman bowed himself, with the king leaning on his hand. The Romans always paid respect to the deities of the people whom they conquered, and the temples of the deities. And as tradition has not seized on any other spot, the foundations of this mosque may be those of the old heathen temple. On this spot Ahaz may have seen the altar, a copy of which he sent to Jerusalem, and the very temple of Rimmon, which Abraham, David, and Elijah may also have seen. The present mosque was originally a Christian church, a part of whose old walls escaped the ignorant fury of the Mahomedans. This old wall can be seen from the top of the gold-

* Vide Art. Aretas, Smith's Bible Dict.

smiths' shops. Climbing up a narrow stairway from the bazaar, I took a short ladder, and laying it down from one roof to another, I crossed until I went close to the wall, along which are a number of windows with circular arches and rich carving, dating back to the third or fourth century. On the wall, in Greek, is a quotation from Psalm cxlv. 13: "Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." In the Mosque of Omar on Moriah, and in St. Sophia in Constantinople, there are also traces of the Christian faith visible. May they be prophetic of the permanency of God's truth and its triumph over the unreasoning bigotry and gross darkness of Mahomedanism!

Six miles south of Damascus, on a spur of Jebel Aswad, is the Village of Kokeb, which signifies a star. A rude wall encloses the village, which is composed of about a score of families. This is the scene of Saul's conversion. Traces of the Roman road are yet visible on the western side of the hill on which Kokeb is situated. At this point he would obtain his first view of the rich plain and the far-famed city, when the light from heaven shone round about him, and he heard the voice: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" In company with the Rev. J. G. Phillips I rode up to the village. It seemed deserted. After a considerable time the sheik's wife appeared, gaily dressed, and with a piece of red cloth on her head, cut in the form of a star. Her lord was in Damascus, she said. There is a strong conviction among the ignorant peasants that Europeans travel among the ruins of the east to find hidden treasures of gold, and precious stones. Moreover, all the deciphering of inscriptions on temples and ruins is not for the sake of knowledge, but to discover those supposed treasures in the earth. Our hostess at once asked: "Are you looking for hidden treasure? There is plenty in that

spot," she said, pointing to a heap of rubbish. "Why do you not dig for it?" we asked. In reply she shrugged her shoulders, but said nothing. With a great deal of ceremony we parted from her and others who had gathered courage to come out and hear the conversation. In parting she gave us her benediction, which was beautiful in sentiment, though we were quite aware she did not, in her heart, mean to bless us. "Go my children, go, and may Allah go with you and make your way smooth and pleasant before you as the plain of Damascus." We wished them all peace, and rode back to the city, and as we looked back as far as the eye could reach, we saw the citizens of Kokeb watching where we were going to dig for hidden treasures. There are many spots in and around this old city which the traditions of centuries have connected with famous deeds and men of the world's childhood. On the north-east, and outside the walls, is the modern house for the lepers. The place is a tumble-down, miserable apology for a hospital, and its inmates are the most loathsome of all the lepers I had seen in Palestine. This, tradition says, is the site of the house of Naaman, the leper, who was captain of the host of the King of Syria. If so, he must have had a better house to shelter him than the present hovels, otherwise he must have been an object of pity.

Northward of Damascus is Jobar, the traditional site of Hobah. Early in Genesis, we read of the capture of Lot and his goods, after the defeat of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. When Abraham was told, of it by one of the escaped fugitives he started in pursuit with his three hundred and eighteen servants, and in a night battle, at Dan, routed Chedorlaomer and his forces and pursued them over the high shoulders of Hermon and down into the plain as far as Hobah, on the left hand of Damascus. Jobar is a small village, possessing an old Jewish synagogue. It is said to cover the spot

on which Abraham prayed, when thanking God for his victory, and also, with sublime indifference to historic facts, the place where Elijah was fed by ravens. The synagogue contains a few old scrolls of the law, one of which I attempted to purchase, without success, from the old Jewess who guided us through the building.

There is only one Jewish family now in Hobab. We met the head of the family at the door of the synagogue. In conversation, we asked if he would like the Messiah to come, in his day. He clasped his hands together, and with his face turned heavenward, devoutly prayed, "Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name." When we said, the Messiah has come, he refused to speak any more on the subject. The veil is on the eyes of the sons and daughters of Israel to this day. In every land they are the same in spirit and in blindness, living epistles known and read of all men, witnesses of the veracity of the Word of God: "I will gather you and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath . . . As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I, the Lord, have poured out my fury upon you." *

In this region we find traditions about the early progenitors of the human family. Here Adam is said to have lived, and Abraham to have reigned as king. One feels that he is near the cradle of the race even in this plain of Damascus. A day's march westward of Damascus is Sûk Wady Barada, on the site of ancient Abilene, of which Lysanias was tetrarch, in the fifteenth year of Tiberius.† It is situated in a fertile valley, watered by the Barada. I scaled the mountains behind the village by a narrow and difficult gorge. On the summit, about a thousand feet above the valley, a narrow path winds

* Ezek. xxii. 21, 22. † Luke iii. 1.

along the edge of the precipice, which at least demands a firm nerve to ensure the safety of every one who travels it. On a plateau a little beyond the village are the ruins of a temple composed of massive stones, dedicated in the early centuries to some Syrian god or goddess. Near it is the traditional tomb of Abel, about forty feet in length; it is probably an aqueduct used in connection with the services of the temple close to it. I asked my local guide how high Abel was when alive, for his grave was very large. "He was over one hundred feet," he replied. How do you know this? "The man who sleeps in the tomb," pointing to a cave near at hand, "told me so." Why was he so high? "Because he was a prophet," was the response. I was informed that he died at one hundred and twenty years of age, and that Cain, his brother, is buried beside him. As a parting question I asked him how long ago it was since Abel died, and was informed "about thirty years ago." Thus truth and tradition are mingled in one confused mass in the superstitious minds of the ignorant Mahomedans and Syrians.

The famous temple of Baalbek came in sight early in the afternoon. Its six massive columns have stood like sentinels guarding these ancient ruins, so full of interest to antiquarians, to Christians, and to all who take pleasure in tracing the foot-prints of the race from the time when Baal worshippers erected their massive temples on the high hills of Syria, through long eras of intellectual, material, and moral progress, until the present. On a low hill to the south-east of the temple, are ancient cisterns, hewn out of the rock, and foundations of ancient buildings can be traced. Here probably stood the ancient city whose inhabitants worshipped Baal in that temple upon whose massive foundations other races have erected the walls, and some of the columns that are yet standing. Is this Baalgad the northern border of Palestine in the days of

Joshua? "Even unto Baalgad in the Valley of Lebanon under Mount Hermon,"* "unto the entering into Hamath,"† help to determine the question. The Hebrew term for valley is the same as the modern Arabic, Bukâ'a, applied to the broad, fertile plain between the Anti-Lebanon and Lebanon ranges. The site of Baalgad, or Baal as the god of fortune, was under Mount Hermon, and at the entrance to Hamath. Baalbek is not too far north to suit this language, for it is probable the kingdom of Hamath extended south to the high land, in which the Orontes takes its rise. And immediately north of Baalbek one would enter into the valley, which expands in breadth the further one travels northward, and thus suits the language of the sacred historian. The one strongest objection to the theory that Baalbek is the ancient Baalgad, is the fact that Baalgad was "under Mount Hermon," which is the southern point of the Anti-Lebanon range. But Hermon, which merely signifies "lofty" or "elevated," may have been applied to the whole range, and it would therefore be quite correct to say that Baalgad was situated under Hermon. The only other place which claims the honour of being ancient Baalgad is Banias, and the temple-fortress on the spur of Hermon, behind the village. The site is certainly under Hermon, and the valley down which the Lîtâni flows between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges is comparatively narrow, and is certainly the entrance into the broad plain on which Baalbek stands. Besides, the foundations of Subeibeh are massive, and very ancient, and such as the same people who erected Baalbek may have built. The weight of authority seems to incline in favour of Baalbek, though a fair inference from the passages in Joshua would lead me to regard Banias and the temple-fortress of Subeibeh as the true site of Baalgad. The people

* Josh. xi. 17. † Josh. xiii. 5.

who built such temples were a religious people ; and, had Paul visited them as he did the Athenians he would have given them credit for the same spirit that ruled the Greeks. But while the Greeks delighted in the æsthetic, and aimed to reach the highest ideal in art and architecture, the people who built Baalbek strove to rear the most colossal structures to the honour of the sun god. It requires many days to go out and in among those great ruins, to examine fallen blocks and climb over massive walls before one can realize the immensity of that ruined temple. Beginning at the east is a hexagonal court, from which an entrance leads into a rectangular area, one hundred and forty-seven yards long from east to west, and one hundred and twenty-three broad. From this area, by a flight of steps now in ruins, the worshippers ascended into the Great Temple around which a colonnade extended, the only remnants of which are six Corinthian fluted columns about sixty feet high, and are enough to help us to imagine what the grandeur of this must have once been. To the south is the Temple of the Sun, whose entrance is richly carved with various devices. The interior of the building is partly filled with fallen ruins ; around the top is fine scroll work, and on the arches that project over niches for the gods and goddesses, is some exquisite workmanship. These edifices, though dating back perhaps prior to the Christian era, are modern compared with the old Baal Temple on whose site they were partly erected. To the north of the Great Temple is an outer wall, ten feet in thickness, in which the stones are thirty feet long. On the west side, however, are the stones that have made every traveller ask what race raised such monster blocks and by what means ? The men whose hands reared them have become dust ; as a race they have perished, and their god and their religion are counted only among the curious things of a remote antiquity. But these stones remain there to testify to the mechanical

ingenuity and zeal of Baal's followers. The three giant stones that may date back from fifteen to twenty hundred years B.C. are, one, sixty-four feet long, another, sixty-three feet eight inches, the third, sixty-three feet. They are thirteen feet high and probably the same in breadth. In the quarry, a few minutes' drive from the temple, is a colossal block, not separated from the rock, sixty-nine feet long and fourteen feet high, on which the marks of the chisels and picks are quite distinct. The same methods by which colossal obelisks and statues were reared in Egypt, and the great stones of the Pyramids, were doubtless applied here. And in the unity of architectural style it is possible we may trace a close relationship in the way of commerce between those northern races and the Egyptians on the south, and find evidence that these builders of Baalbek were a branch of the same stock as the men who reared up the mighty Karnak temple to Amon-Ra, the sun god of Egypt.

Our tent was pitched in the area, under the shadow of the immense columns yet standing to tell of the glory of their fallen and perished companions and of the temple itself in the long centuries ago. The two busy days we spent among these famous ruins were altogether too short to climb over endless masses of fallen stone, scale walls, penetrate dark dungeons, and examine in detail the myriad objects of colossal grandeur, and beauty, and interest in and about this temple. But time was pressing us, and it was with deep regret we rode out from Baalbek, in the early morning, and left the mighty temple which will continue to afford future visitors the same pleasure which it did us. The ride across the rich plain was monotonous, relieved only by the salutations of the shepherds and farmers whom we passed at intervals. We reached Zahleh early in the afternoon. It is romantically situated high up on the brow of the Lebanon. The white houses are very con-

spicuous on the face of the hill for miles. The citizens are industrious, and a number of European reaping machines are in use here. And the only objection which the people have to a threshing machine is that it does its work so quickly that they would have nothing to do after a few days' labour with such machine. Mr. Smart remained here with the missionary of the American Presbyterian Church at Zahleh, who had been his companion in college days. The missionary came out to meet us, and under his escort we rode into this beautiful Syrian town. As I intended to ride beyond Ainzehalteh, on the Lebanon, the following day, I hastened on with Alexander. We reached Mekseh at sundown, and found our dragoman angry with every one in general and Alexander in particular. He was jealous of Alexander's popularity and his prospect of soon receiving a handsome bukshish at Beirût. I had to complete arrangements for my visit to the Cedars the following day. A local guide was obtained who belonged to Zahleh. The dragoman professed to have got for me the best horse possible for the long and trying journey. However, I was informed by faithful Alexander that he secretly was placing every obstacle in the way, by telling the owner of the horse it would ruin the animal to climb the rugged footways up the mountain. The matter was discussed between the dragoman, the owner of the horse and myself in the tent until late at night. The owner of the horse refused on any terms to let him go, on what he regarded as a perilous journey. The dragoman feigned rage, took his tarboosh from his head, flung it on the tent floor, and trampled on it, and swore he would in like manner treat any man who hindered me from seeing the cedars. The Mahomme-dan yielded to this exhibition of friendship for me and said, "It is well, let the howadjah go." I thought it was a settled matter, and on the following morning, very early, in company with a gentleman from the State of New York, left the tent.

We had been only ten minutes on our route when the muleteer rode up furiously, and refused to allow his horse for the journey. As I had paid for the horse and determined to go, I concluded that firmness was necessary to meet this mighty flow of angry Arabic. He took hold of the bridle, and said no mortal power would compel him to unloose his grasp. A threat to refer the matter to the consul at Beirût tended to lessen his volubility of speech. The loud shouts of the Mahommedan attracted some one who reported the matter to a Turkish official, in an office on the diligence road leading to Beirût. The struggle took place on a narrow footpath, at the edge of a steep embankment, over which if we had fallen into the deep gorge a thousand feet below, death would have settled the matter for horses and riders. We appealed to the local dignitary for justice. We stated our case in French; the muleteer then made a long speech in Arabic. After his oration was ended two soldiers made a few statements to the Kadi, in Arabic, which contained frequent references to my companion and myself, as infidel dogs. Meantime the local guide had hastened back to the tent and informed the dragoman of our difficulty. As we were waiting for the decision of the Turk, the dragoman rode up in hot haste, and in well simulated excitement and zeal for us asked the guilty muleteer in tones of bitter contempt, "Art thou the dragoman? art thou an effendi?" The poor muleteer, whom the dragoman had urged to thwart our going to the cedars, had to confess he had not the honour of being either of these high functionaries, and went away ashamed. The Turk and the dragoman feigned terrible displeasure at his action and wished us the blessing of Allah.

Our route lay along the course of deep valleys, gradually ascending the spurs of the mighty Lebanon, that stretch in every direction. We passed many villages perched up like

eagles' nests, far from the busy thousands of Beirût or Damascus. Fig trees, vines, and pine trees encircled the villages. Onward and upward we rode, at one time over terraces and among dense clusters of fig and walnut trees, again winding along a narrow path hundreds of feet above the deep gorges below. Finally after the sun had begun to descend towards the Great Sea we reached Ainzahalteh, perched high in the clefts of the rock. It was a steep, hard climb for the last half hour after crossing the beautiful Nahr-el-Kâdr, and when we dismounted at the door of Ameen Shakoor's mission house we were stiff and our horses panting. The training school and mission of Ainzahalteh prepares young men for teachers in the villages on Mount Lebanon, and also qualifies to matriculate in the college at Beirût. It is under the charge of Ameen Shakoor, a Syrian, who is a man of intense devotion, of great intelligence and faith. He is aided by Mrs. Watson who has devoted her life to this important work. The school is the centre from which the light of the Gospel of God is shining out among the natives in the multitudes of villages. We procured a guide and rode as far as possible, then on foot trudged for weary hours among deep, soft snow, and at length were rewarded by a view of the magnificent cedars. It was a holiday in the schools, and many of the boys met us, bright cheery, intelligent little fellows. They asked about Canada, its schools, and churches. What kind of schools have you there? and what do the boys do there during holiday times? they asked. They praised their schools and school-masters; and in this, set a bright example to the fault-finders and chronic grumblers in many Canadian schools. The power of the Gospel is mighty in the Lebanon hills, where ancient heathenism reigned, and even now the prophecy of the Scripture is being fulfilled: "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like

Lebanon.”* After much kindness at the hands of Mr. Shakoor we began to descend, over narrow paths full of loose stones, that frequently slipped from under the horses’ feet. As we rode in places high up on the brow of the hill and gazed down on the abysses below, and could hear the roar of the mountain streams rushing against the rocks, we shuddered to think of the consequences if our sure-footed horse made a false step. The whole scene was one of wild grandeur, and will never die from my memory while time lasts. As the last rays of the sun were lingering we reached the diligence road, paid our friendly guide, bade him and the Lebanons adieu forever, and hastened on for Beirût which we could see far away on the sea coast. We reached Beirût late at night and rode by the aid of the moon through the sweet-scented suburbs to our hotel which was by the sea.

* Ps. lxxii. 16.



CHAPTER XX.

FROM BEIRUT TO SMYRNA.

“Cæsar came to Berytus, which is a city of Phœnicia, and a Roman colony, and exhibited a still more pompous solemnity about his father’s birthday, both in the magnificence of the shows, and in other vast expenses.”—*Bell. Jud.* Bk. vii. 3.



BEIRUT is in appearance a European city. The style of the houses, the numerous schools, colleges, and convents in the city and its suburbs are European. Arabic or Turkish is seldom heard spoken on the streets. French, German, Italian, or English are the languages one hears in the post-office, hotels, and places of business. The climate is mild and the atmosphere balmy; while the soil of the plain on which the city is built is fertile, and the luxuriant vegetation equals that of Damascus. Authentic history of Beirût does not date much prior to the time of Alexander. Berothai, one of the cities of Hadadezer, was captured by David and from it he carried away much brass. This city could not have been far from Hamath; for Toi, its king, sent salutations of peace, and presents of gold, silver, and brass to him. In marking the northern boundaries of the land of Israel, Hamath, and Berothah are named. Berothai and Berothah may therefore be identical, and be the name of the ancient city on whose site and ruins modern Beirût stands. It is scarcely possible those ancient seamen, the Phœnicians, would not have used this harbour, which is probably the best on the whole coast of

Syria. The Bay of St. George is not likely to have escaped their notice as a favourable roadstead. Though a large amount of the products of Damascus was conveyed inland by caravans, it is reasonable to expect that the Phœnician traders would traffic in the exports of Damascus, and Beirût would be the nearest and best port for such purposes. The modern Beirût and the ancient Berothah may be from the same root, the one Hebrew and the other Arabic, signifying "a well." For some unknown reason there may have been numerous wells dug there, and present facts agree with this meaning of the name of the city. Dr. Thomson says it is "a city of wells, almost every house has one."

A Roman colony was planted there, and coins of the era of Augustus have been found with the inscription, "The happy colony of Augustus at Berytus." Agrippa built theatres, baths, and colonnades, and enriched the city with many costly public edifices. After the destruction of Jerusalem and the subjection of Palestine to the Roman Empire Titus visited Berytus. Among other spectacles by which he delighted the citizens was that of the wholesale butchery of the captive Jews. Many were torn to pieces by wild beasts, others were put to death by fire, while some of the wretched prisoners were compelled even to murder each other to gratify their heartless, heathen conquerors. For centuries Beirût was the most famous centre of learning in the Empire, and its illustrious school of jurisprudence attracted young men from distant cities. A violent earthquake in A.D. 551 almost destroyed the entire city, from the effects of which calamity it never recovered. During the troublous times of the crusaders it experienced the bitter fortunes of war. At one time it was ruled by the crusaders, at another by the Saracens, according as victory favoured one or other of the contending hosts.

An extensive trade is carried on between Beirût and the

countries along the shores of the Mediterranean. It is the shipping port of Syria. Silks from Damascus and the products from the interior are brought to Beirût by extensive caravans, and thence shipped to other cities; while the produce of Europe—cotton, linen, hardware, and other articles—are carried inland by camels, horses, and mules.

The city is sheltered on the east and north by spurs of the Lebanon, from which one may have a magnificent view of it, spread out on the level plain, like a raised map. Beyond the city, either on the diligence road or on any of the lofty hills towards the north-east, a view of great beauty is obtained. White houses dot the hillsides, and deep valleys abound, which are watered by small, clear streamlets. In the distance, the city appears like an earthly paradise with its numerous large gardens of mulberry, fig, and palm trees. In many directions vineyards can be seen, and terraces on which are tropical plants and shrubs, with beautiful flowers of every hue, whose fragrance is inhaled with pleasure as one rides through the gardens in the early morning or in the evening towards sundown. In many of these gardens are ruins of ancient structures, while in the sea, at the harbour, numerous granite columns are lying. They had been erected in 1840 as a breakwater, but the violence of the sea has overturned them, and as the Mahommedans regarded this as the will of Allah, they have made no further effort to utilize them. It is quite possible these columns may have belonged to the edifices built by the Romans who, however, would make use of any ruins of the temples erected by an earlier race; and, as this part of Syria was devoted largely to the worship of Baal and Astheroth, these ruins, together with those of an ancient aqueduct, yet visible, may date back to the Roman or even to the Phœnician times.

The colleges and schools in Beirût are doing much for the spread of knowledge and of the Gospel among the Syrian

population. One of these private schools for native children I visited on Sunday afternoon. It is under the care and management of Miss Taylor and Mrs. McBean, two intelligent and zealous Christian women, who have devoted their private means, as well as their life, to this very important and successful work. There were about seventy present, including fifteen or twenty Syrian and Mahommedan women and a few men. The children receive a thorough training in the Scriptures. Their answers to questions put by learned doctors of divinity and others would have been creditable to the pupils of any Sabbath school in Canada. Some of the women and children were Mahommedans, who came to learn the English language. They were acquiring this accomplishment by studying the Scriptures and the Shorter Catechism. The latter book they were committing to memory, with the proofs. This can be safely said, that if their English be based on the model of the Bible it will be terse and powerful, and if the Lord opens their hearts to receive His truth, while they are students of English, they cannot have more solid food than that of the Shorter Catechism.

In conversation with one of the Mahommedans, who were present, I asked his opinion of the work of the school. His wife, I believe, was among those who were studying the Scriptures. He said "It is good for the children to learn," but he was doubtful as to the propriety of giving women education. But I replied, "In our country the great and wise men have said they received the power that made them great from the wise and Christian training of their mothers. If you wish to have great and good men in your country you should give the mothers all the education possible." With all the haughtiness and fanaticism of a Mahommedan, he replied, "We have the true knowledge of Allah in the Koran." "But," I said, "we have the knowledge of Allah, also." "Yes," responded the

turbaned old Mahommedan, "but your knowledge is inferior to ours. Allah has given you the knowledge of many things, and you make steamships, engines, and other great works, but he has given us the highest wisdom of himself." He had no very exalted opinion of Europeans in general, nor of our religion in particular. And the question of the co-education of the sexes the old fanatic would settle by one short mandate, that females shall have no education at all. The children sang two hymns, one in Arabic, the other in English, with good taste and in good time, and in a manner which would have done credit to many of our Canadian schools. From such schools the future men and women will come who will carry the light of the Gospel to their fellow-Syrians in the valleys and on the hills, where in the past ages the wild orgies of Baal and Ashtaroth and other heathen deities were celebrated. The hope of Syria and the Orient, generally, is the same as in Canada—in the mental and spiritual training of the children.

At six o'clock in the evening we sailed out of the harbour of Beirût for Smyrna. The ship was crowded from stem to stern and from deck to cabin. Every available inch of deck room was occupied by men, women and children. Greeks, Latins, Armenians, and Mahommedans were returning—pilgrims from Jerusalem and Mecca. The wildest confusion reigned on deck. In one place a family had spread out their mats and were eating stale, hard bread, and drinking coffee. In another corner, men were stretched out asleep on the deck, with their heads resting on a bag of pots, cooking utensils, and odds and ends for a pillow. Women, with haggard faces, were crouched up in every sheltered place, nursing their infants or seeking repose after the exciting scenes of the previous weeks. Men shod with heavy boots, and luxuriating in fur caps and jackets when the thermometer marked eighty

and ninety degrees; others in long, loose, flowing robes, with turbans and hats of all sizes, shapes, and colours, were steadily going and coming with vessels of cold and hot water in their hands, the contents of which we were in danger of receiving on our head or face at any moment. Among this motley crowd was a Mahommedan returning from Mecca. Along with him, as a deck passenger, was a white donkey, which was now sacred in its master's eyes. So crowded was the deck that the sacred donkey could not lie down. It was impossible for even tough donkey flesh to stand on its feet for four or five days without rest. The owner demanded the captain, a hot-headed Italian, to remove some infidel pilgrim and let his poor donkey lie down in his place. "Where will I put the man to make room for your donkey?" asked the captain. "There," responded the Mahommedan, pointing to a dark hole in which the ship's chains and ropes were stowed away. In language more powerful than polite the Captain told him to go into the hole himself, and give the donkey his own place. As he was unwilling to make such a sacrifice, the donkey had to struggle with infidels for a share of the deck. It was a trying time for the Mahommedan in other ways. He must say his prayers, at least three times a day, facing towards Mecca. As a faithful son of the Prophet, and a pilgrim, he must not fail to pray. But the problem was how and where to pray. There was no room on the deck to kneel. He could not enter the cabin, and it was dangerous to climb towards the masts and pray. Necessity is the mother of invention, and necessity triumphs over all obstacles. It was so then. A barrel stood on end beside him. It was occupied by bags, rugs, bread, and copper cooking-vessels. He made a bundle of them, swung them across the donkey's back, mounted the barrel, and began in deep gutturals and long-drawn tones to pray. The rolling and lurching of the ship made it somewhat dangerous to pray

even on a barrel. It required nerve and dexterity, two qualities not usually needed in devotions. The barrel stood near the ship's side and a heavy lurch of the ship would throw the praying Mahommedan either backward among the pilgrims at the risk of grievous bodily damage, or forward into the sea at the peril of his life. I watched him with interest and curiosity. I thought, if Mahommedans say short prayers, he will exercise that grace now. The ship lurched and tossed, the praying man swayed now to the one side, then to the other; occasionally a heavier wave than usual struck the ship, then the Mahommedan was forced to stretch out his arms and clutch wildly at the back of his donkey or the neck of an infidel pilgrim who happened to be within reach. Thus his devotions were interrupted, but he went on unmoved by the sailors at their work, by the shrill crying of infants, and the loud demands of children for bread. The devotions were not shortened by one syllable, or by one minute, and his conscience was at rest. Towards the close of his devotions I observed the usual custom of the Mahommedans, which I had seen frequently in Syria and at Damascus. He put out the forefinger of his right hand, then, turning his head slightly round, he addressed the good spirits whom they believe always to be on our right hand to defend us, "Salamât alakum,"—"Peace be to you." Then, turning to the left, he addressed the evil spirits, "Salamât alakum,"—"Peace be to you." In their prayers they are far-seeing, they thank the good spirits for their protection, and the bad ones to keep them in good humour.

Early in the forenoon, the low-lying shores of the Island of Cyprus came in view, and anchor was cast off Larnaca which occupies the site of ancient Citium. Josephus says the whole island was named after this city. "Cethimus possessed the island Cethima; it is now called Cyprus."* The contiguity of

* Ant. I. 6, 1.

the island to the mainland renders it probable that a Phœnician colony had early settled there. The Kittim or Chittim, are among the descendants of Javan, and the same name is applied to the island: "Ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Asshur," and in the later prophets the term is used in reference either to a maritime people on the sea coast or on an island. The form of the word Chittim at once suggests the Hittites, a branch of the original Canaanitish stock. This would identify the Hittites with the Phœnicians, the early colonists on the island. The licentious worship of Aphrodité or Venus became the prevailing form of idolatry there, and wherever the Phœnicians went. Wine and olives were among the island's chief products in ancient times as well as now. From Cyprus copper was obtained in considerable quantities, which the Romans named cuprum, after the island.

The island has been frequently conquered, and suffered severely from foreign invasions. Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, Crusaders and British have in succession held possession of it. It was the home of Barnabas, and the scene of Paul's first missionary work after leaving Antioch. At Paphos on the south-western side of the island, Sergius Paulus the Romans deputy lived, and there Elymas the sorcerer was struck blind. General Di Cesnola has excavated cities, tombs and temples on the island, and dug up treasure in gold, silver and brass, marble statues and vases of terra cotta. At Paphos he has discovered the name Sergius Paulus. Though this may not be the name of the Proconsul at the time of Paul's visit, it is evidence that the name was borne by some officer of note on the island during the Roman era.

An old tradition states that Lazarus came to Cyprus after the Lord had raised him from the dead at Bethany, and preached the Gospel there for thirty years. The Church of St. Lazarus is dedicated to him and built over the supposed

site of his tomb. The soil around Larnaca is sandy, and the water has an alkaline taste. Though the products of the market would remind one of the East rather than the West, the city has a decidedly European aspect. The houses are like those of any European town. The streets attempt to make a compromise. They hold a neutral position between antiquity and modern times. When we look at the houses and see them numbered above the door, we conclude it is a European city. The streets do not decide either way, for we find Pierides, and names of Phœnician streets, and adjoining them are such familiar names as Beaconsfield, Hibernia and Woolseley streets.

Shortly after sunrise on the following morning we landed at Rhodes, the capital of the island of the same name. The modern city is built on the site of the ancient Rhodes, founded about 408 B.C. The original inhabitants were called Heliadæ or "children of the sun," which may point to their Phœnician origin. Baal, as the sun god, was the chief deity of the Phœnicians, who regarded themselves as his offspring. Rhodes became involved in the war between Athens and Sparta, siding with the one State or the other, according as the democracy or oligarchy held the reins of power. The Knights of St. John held and fortified the city for a long time, and numerous interesting memorials of their stay in Rhodes are yet to be seen. The city is surrounded by a wall, which presents a strong appearance on the side along the sea coast. It has two harbours. At the entrance to the one which admits small sailing and fishing boats stood the famous bronze colossus, ninety feet high; and dedicated to Apollo, as the sun god. The streets are narrow, paved with small black and white pebbles, and kept very clean. On many of the houses that date from the time of the crusaders, armorial bearings are carved on the stone above the doors. On Rue des Chevaliers an old pulpit or reading desk is built into the wall of a house, which must have been a church in those

early days when the Christian warriors were making desperate struggles against the Saracens. On the gates of the city wall and above the arches of ancient buildings are carved shields, helmets, banners and musical instruments which tell of wars that have happily passed and been followed by peace and the dawn of better times for the world, when man shall not slay his fellow for his religious creed or the convictions of his conscience.

Leaving Rhodes, we sailed among the islands off the coast of Asia, that have been famous in heathen mythology, Grecian history and in Bible story. Far away to the left, Patmos appeared. A hazy atmosphere shrouded the island, famous as the dreary, desolate abode of the beloved John. Only its outlines were seen. I counted four elevations or cones that stood above the general surface. It is not necessary to say that one looks, as I did, with affection almost, on Patmos, whither, according to tradition and the most natural meaning of his own language, John was banished "because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ;" and where the seer beheld that unique vision of angels, elders and thrones, seals, vials, trumpets, divine judgments and the Lamb seated upon the throne.

At eight o'clock the following morning, our ship cast anchor in the splendid harbour of Smyrna, in which rode large vessels, flying from their masts the flags of Austria, Russia, France, Turkey, and England.

Smyrna is well built, and is the most flourishing city in Asia, and in some respects is even superior to Constantinople. It is situated on a fertile plain, while the suburbs extend along the base of the hill which rises up behind the city, towards the south-east. The population is about one hundred and fifty thousand, composed of Armenians, Greeks, French, and Mahomedans. The public buildings along the harbour are European

in style. The locomotive whistle, the shunting of railway cars at the station, and the Europeans at work loading and unloading vessels, make one forget that it is an Oriental city. The presence of so many Europeans and the introduction of western customs and inventions into the city are abominations in the eyes of the rigid Mahommedans, who call it "infidel Smyrna." The origin of the city dates back to very early times. The old city had been destroyed and rebuilt. In Strabo's time, it had become a place of importance. The streets were broad, well paved and straight. Among its public edifices was a quadrangular portico, the Homereium in which was a temple of Homer and also his statue.* Like other cities along the coast of Asia, Smyrna has suffered from earthquakes and felt the various fortunes of war. At the base of the hill behind the city, are the ruins of an ancient stradium, near which Polycarp is said to have been put to death. The citizens took the deepest interest in the Olympian games, against which Polycarp and the leading persons in the Christian Church bore testimony. Their refusal to join in the public games exposed the Christians in Smyrna, as elsewhere in the Roman Empire, to the charge of being traitors. It was in response to the fierce and fanatical clamours of the mob at the public games, that the officer handed over the venerable saint, who had served Christ for eighty-six years, to their fury. He was promised his life if he would curse Christ and swear by the fortune of Cæsar. The venerable man replied, "He has done me nothing but good, and how could I curse him, my Lord and Saviour." "I will cast you to the wild beasts" threatened the proconsul. "Bring the wild beasts hither," replied the prisoner, "for change my mind from the better to the worse I will not." Determined to terrify him by bodily agonies the Roman

* Vide. Strabo, bk. xiv. 1, 37.

threatened, "I will subdue your spirit by the flames." Unmoved by fear and full of faith Polycarp answered, "the flames endure but for a time, but there is a fire reserved for the wicked, the fire of a judgment to come and of a punishment everlasting." Thus died the faithful man, who had known in his youth the Apostle John, and to whom perhaps, as the angel of the church in Smyrna, John penned these words of commendation and encouragement: "I know thy works and tribulation and poverty. . . Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."





CONSTANTINOPLE.

CHAPTER XXI.

FROM EPHESUS TO CONSTANTINOPLE.

“The Ephesians, youths and all, deserve hanging, for expelling Hermodorus, a citizen distinguished for his virtues, and saying, let there be no such among us.”—*Strabo* xiv. 1.



RIDE of an hour and forty minutes by rail brought us to Ephesus. The route lay along a rich valley, at times quite narrow, and occasionally expanding to a considerable breadth. Fields were green with wheat in the valley, and the hills were covered with vines. At the stopping places along the route villainous-looking Greeks were to be seen. They could pass creditably as descendants of the fierce brigands that have infested this part of Asia from remote times. On their feet were thick, heavy shoes, then came rough leggings which were fastened to short trowsers, a little below the knee. A large scarf or piece of cloth was folded many times round their body; and on their breast, beneath the folds of cloth, was, what might pass for a leather shield. It was the hide of an animal, with the hairy side outwards, and seemed to be used as a piece of defensive armour and not as an article of dress. To a leather belt round their waist, were fastened two or three pistols and short dirks, besides brass or leather pouches for shot, powder and other munitions of war. Their fierce expression of face, and warlike exterior made me feel they would not be pleasant companions to meet at night in a lonely place. The shrill whistle of the locomotive echoing among the

hills and valleys of Asia, and the rushing of railway carriages seemed out of harmony with the unchangeable ideas and customs of the Orient. The people have not yet become inspired with our western spirit, and it is questionable if they ever will. Climate and food have largely moulded the nature of the Orientals and will continue to do so. Hence they will always lack the energy and enterprise of other races. At the stations this fact is always observable. There is no excitement, no station officials are seen hurrying to give or obtain orders. There are no over-driven baggage men whose temper is tried by a score of persons demanding at the same moment that he should check their trunks and valises. Everyone moves slowly and with dignity even at a railway station in the East. Time is always at a discount and the train may wait as easily a *sa donkey*. Towards noon the train stopped at the station near the site of ancient Ephesus. How strange the sight of a locomotive, puffing masses of black smoke from its smoke-stack, and the roar of steam escaping from the safety-valve would have appeared to St. John or St. Paul, who had to travel by slower and more laborious means over this very region. Place comfortable carriages, in contrast with the primitive methods yet existing in the east, and the splendid steamships that plough the blue water of the Mediterranean in contrast with the slow, unsafe and uncomfortable vessels in which St. Paul sailed frequently between Europe and Asia, and we can see the vast progress the world has made in mechanical science, and its application to commerce and the comfort of the race. Modern Ephesus consists of a score of miserable huts near the railway station. They are occupied by Greeks who prefer plunder to tilling the soil or honest labour. The ancient city was situated in a fertile plain extending to the sea coast where the harbour is, at which Paul landed in his journeys to and from Ephesus. This plain is some miles in breadth and is hemmed in on the

north, south and east by ranges of hills. So favourably situated as regards fertility of soil, and possessing a good harbour, Ephesus speedily became a wealthy and populous city and the capital of Western Asia. Strabo says "it daily improves, and is the largest mart in Asia." The original city was situated on the hill Coressus; subsequently the people occupied the plain, but finally took possession of the hill Prion. There is no doubt the city extended far out into the plain on every side of this hill, for ruins and foundations of houses are seen in the valley in every direction. Though the Cayster flowed through the plain, the clear, sparkling water was brought from the mountains, some miles distant, by an aqueduct. Near the railway station are numerous stone pillars, supporting the ruined arches of this aqueduct. They seem to be of Roman workmanship, and resemble those that are yet standing on the Roman Campagna. On the upper part of this once splendid aqueduct the white storks have built their huge nests of coarse sticks. David referring to the habits of the stork says, "as for the stork, the fir trees are her house." Though they are most frequently found now among ruins, it is no valid objection against the statement of Scripture. Among fallen cities they could build their nests and rear their young undisturbed. In David's time such ruins as are now in Palestine and Asia did not exist. Hence they would follow their natural instinct and build on the trees. But the level top of a column or a wall would be more convenient on which to build, and besides they would soon find they were safer among these forsaken abodes of men. Scores of storks were on that aqueduct, looking out over the ruins of the once wealthy and splendid capital of Asia. Their Hebrew name is derived from a root-word signifying "kindness," from the strong affection shown to their offspring. As if to maintain their good reputation, and verify the correct observation of the ancients, they

had allowed other birds to build, without molestation, their small nests on the outside of their own. A number of small birds had utilized the sticks which composed the storks' nests on the ruined arches and, with little additional labour, prepared nests for themselves. Thus there seemed to be a friendly, social community of birds on those old arches in which the weaker enjoyed the protection and labours of the strong. At a short distance from the railway station, towards the plain, is situated a ruined mosque. The material of which it is built appeared to have belonged to a more ancient edifice. The columns are granite, of different size and order, and the impression one receives from the outline and arrangements, as well as material of the building, is, that it has been a Christian church converted into a mosque. It can scarcely be the original church of St. John, in which the beloved apostle preached until his death. Earthquakes and war have almost annihilated the splendid and durable heathen temple of Diana, and other vast edifices during eighteen centuries, and it is not possible that an humble Christian church could have survived the ravages of time and war. Tradition may have preserved the site of the church, in which the last of the apostles preached the Gospel to the rich, vain, and heathen Ephesians, but the original building must have fallen centuries ago.

Beyond this church of St. John, a few minutes walk in a westerly direction, are the ruins and foundations of the world-famous temple of Diana, the tutelary goddess of Ephesus, whom "all Asia and the world worshippeth." * It was situated in a low marshy part of the plain to the north-east of the hill Prion. The original temple is said to have been burned on the night on which Alexander the Great was born. Women gave their ornaments of gold and silver, and generous contri-

butions poured in from every citizen in order to rebuild the temple. Cheirocrates, who had built Alexandria, completed this second Temple of Ephesus. It was of colossal dimensions and of great architectural splendour, four hundred and twenty-five feet in length, and two hundred and twenty in breadth. The roof was supported by one hundred and twenty-seven columns, each sixty feet high, fluted and apparently of a single shaft. Alexander offered to rebuild the temple if the Ephesians would inscribe his name, as the restorer, on it. This proposal they refused, but, at the same time, did not wish to incur his vengeance, hence, both to flatter his royal vanity and save themselves, they replied "that it was not fit that a god should provide temples in honour of gods." * This was the temple which St. John and St. Paul saw. The grandeur and wealth of the temple added to the fame of the goddess. Small silver shrines, models of the temple, and copies of the goddess herself were made in the city. The craftsmen did a thriving trade in these things. During the celebration of the public games, when multitudes were present from all parts of Asia and from many of the islands in the Mediterranean Sea, the silversmiths would dispose of their wares to the heathen worshippers. When, however, Christianity began to make an impression in Ephesus and the surrounding country, the people lost faith in the goddess and in the virtue of these images of Diana. In order to check the inroad of Christianity and prevent the ruin of their trade, Demetrius gathered the craftsmen and caused the uproar mentioned in the Acts, when they all cried out, about the space of two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

Through the indefatigable labours of Dr. Wood, for nearly ten years, the site of this famous temple has been discovered

* Strabo Lib. xiv. 1, 22.

and its foundations exposed. The whole area is seen, the floor is paved with large marble slabs, many of which are yet in their place, as when they were trodden by the feet of Demetrius and the heathen multitudes nineteen centuries ago. Masses of marble, and immense pieces of fluted columns, bases, and capitals of exquisite workmanship are scattered about. It is situated in a low part of the plain, and at the end of an old road paved with huge polygonal blocks by the Romans. The length and breadth of this street would indicate that it was a leading thoroughfare. Like one of the streets in Pompeii and the Appian Way it is lined on each side with massive sarcophagi. Along this way passed the *élite* of Ephesus, the wealthy, the philosophers and poets, to worship the great goddess. Over those very stones, on that very street, Paul and the beloved John, in all probability, walked during the years of their labour in Ephesus. An ancient road leads round the base of Prion on which the old city stood. The hill is covered with ruins, and on the south-west side is the amphitheatre, elliptical in form and almost entirely hewn out of the mountain. The marble seats rise, tier above tier, for a considerable distance, and in the days when Ephesus was the centre of wealth, refinement and luxury, those seats would be richly cushioned, and everything provided that could add to the comfort of the spectators. The largest diameter of the theatre is six hundred and sixty feet, and was capable of seating over fifty thousand people. Broken statues, blocks of marble on which are carved figures of musicians and actors, columns of delicate workmanship lie in a confused mass in the interior. Climbing over these ruins and up the seats, the scene recorded in the Acts seemed a vivid and real thing to me. The mob, excited by Demetrius and the craftsmen, had dragged Gaius and Aristarchus Paul's companions, into the theatre. The impassioned Greeks were carried away by the fierce anger which had been

aroused against Paul and his teaching. The whole city was in the wildest uproar. Paul, with his usual courage, was about to risk his life in the theatre, beside his companions in travel. He was advised otherwise, and under the judicious management of the town clerk the assembly was dismissed, apparently without bloodshed or murder. This theatre was used, not only for hearing the dramas of famous poets and for spectacular shows, but probably for gladiatorial contests also. The luxurious Ephesians would probably tire of the tame recitations of the poets and would crave for something that would afford them the fleeting pleasure of excited feeling. Hence it is probable that gladiators fought in the area of this theatre, and that wild beasts were also introduced and pitted against famous gladiators, criminals, or persons hated by the heathen public, as St. Paul was. And in this spot, now heaped with the ruins of architectural genius, the Apostle may have been forced to fight with wild beasts. To gratify the malignant enmity of the ignorant mob and afford a moment's enjoyment to the heartless and proud heathen, the Apostle was compelled to fight with beasts at Ephesus. Southward and eastward of the hill Prion are scattered, along the plain, ruins of ancient edifices. What they were is uncertain, probably palaces of the wealthy citizens. Now, the ignorant guide will tell the traveller that they are the sites of the tomb of St. Luke, the house of St. Paul, the school of Tyrannus. Until further excavations and discoveries are made, however, they must remain nameless. On each side of the main street of the ancient city are numerous large sarcophagi. Some are more than seven feet in length and about four in breadth. They have been hewn out of a solid block of marble or light-coloured limestone. The lids are massive and of one slab, arched along the whole length towards the centre, and at each corner is an elevation of three or four inches. Vine wreaths and hanging drapery are carved

upon the lids and sides of these sarcophagi, while here and there are Greek inscriptions on them. These tombs are probably those of the wealthy Greeks and Jews. The latter were drawn to Ephesus because of its extensive commerce. In their synagogue Paul preached. They doubtless spoke the Greek language, and their epitaphs would naturally be written in the prevailing language of Ephesus and Asia rather than in the Hebrew. Near the modern village a spring pours out its cool refreshing water into a large sarcophagus. The dust of its ancient corpse has been washed out long ago. Little did the friends of the dead imagine that this massive stone coffin was to be devoted to such a common but useful purpose as a drinking trough for weary animals and thirsty travellers. Everywhere throughout the Orient one sees in the ruins of temples, tombs, and pyramids how vain is the effort of men to immortalize themselves in stone or brass. All is vanity.

I walked among the extensive ruins of Ephesus, with feelings of very deep reverence. The names of the famous poets, orators and painters did not influence me, nor even the massiveness and architectural glory that could be traced in the remains of the public edifices of the city. The name of the city, the ancient streets, the fertile plain, the hills clothed in the rich garments of eastern spring were sacred, through their association with two of the famous apostles, Paul and John. Standing on Mount Prion one can see in a radius of two miles the splendid remains of temples, theatres, and other buildings once thronged by the heathen multitudes to whom those men at the peril of their life preached the Gospel. Within this area lived Apollos, Aquila and Priscilla, and St. Paul himself, who, in warning the elders of the Church, gives us an insight into his many labours and heart-sorrows in his mission work at Ephesus: "Watch and remember that by the space of three

years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."* In the midst of the abounding wealth and splendour of the city in which he spent so much time and labour for Christ, he asserts the purity of his motives: "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel." The impression made on his mind during his stay in Ephesus may be seen in his epistle addressed to the Church. He wrote it from Rome, where he was in bonds, either in his own hired house, or in prison, where he was awaiting the sentence of death. In figurative language he represents the church at Ephesus as a temple, "built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." The great Temple of Diana had been built on low, marshy ground, and with difficulty the builder had obtained a solid foundation on which to erect the magnificent house. Many suggestions had been made to the architect. Theodorus of Samos advised that a 'foundation of pounded charcoal should be prepared. The temple of living souls, however, in strong contrast with this is built upon a sure and everlasting foundation. The splendid structure of marble, the pride of the heathen Ephesians, and one of the seven wonders of the world was devoted to an idol, which is nothing. To the Christians of Ephesus he writes, "Ye are builded together for an habitation of God."†

The Fathers abound with traditions of St. John who, probably, died towards the close of the century at Ephesus. As one associates the Mount of Olives, Bethlehem and Nazareth with Christ, so he naturally associates Ephesus with St. John. The story of his fleeing from the public baths because Cerinthus, the gnostic, was there, lest the baths should fall on him, is unworthy of one who knew so much of the liberal spirit of Christ, and who must have grown in charity, in the long years

* Acts xx. 31.

† Eph. ii. 22.

that had elapsed, since he had prayed for fire to consume the Samaritans. The following incident, related by Clemens of Alexandria, shows his fidelity to his office and his zeal in the work of saving the heathen. It also gives us a brief, but extensive, glimpse of the lawlessness and brigandage that prevailed in those days. The mountain fastnesses afforded a safe stronghold to the daring spirits who then lived by plunder and murder, as well as to their descendants, who are yet ready for such exciting work, whenever the opportunity offers. In one of his missionary journeys John saw "a young man of stalwart frame and winning countenance." To the elder of the church he said, "I entrust to thee this youth with all earnestness, calling Christ and the Church to witness." The elder took him to his own home, taught him, and at length baptized him. The young man was, however, led away by evil companions. From one step downward to another he went, until he became the leader of the murderous brigands, that made life and property unsafe. On his return by and by to the city, John demanded of the elder, "restore to me the deposit which I and the Saviour entrusted to thee."* "I demand the young man and the soul of the brother." "He is dead. He is dead to God," replied the elder with deep grief of soul. "He has turned brigand." On hearing this John rode on horseback to the fastnesses of the mountains. The brigands seized him. "Lead me to your chief, for this am I come." When the chief, clad in armour, came and recognized John, he was overwhelmed with shame and turned to escape. The apostle followed him, crying aloud, "Pity me my son, thou hast still a hope of life. I will give account to Christ for thee, should need be; the Lord endured the death on our behalf. For thy sake I will give in ransom my own soul. Stay! believe Christ sent me." The

* Vide Early Days of Christianity, p. 400.

young man wept bitterly and embraced the old apostle, who kissed his right hand that had been stained with blood and done so many deeds of violence. He restored the young man to the Church, truly penitent, one for whom there shall be joy among the angels of heaven, as a ransomed sinner. Another story is told which, if true, shows that the embers of his early zeal and love which were kindled from the bosom of Christ were burning even in old age. When he had become too feeble to walk his disciples carried him to his church. At every meeting he repeated the same words, "Little children love one another." The people grew weary of the same words continually repeated, and asked, "Why dost thou always say this?" "Because," he replied, "it is the Lord's command, and if only this be done it is enough." This is the essence of Christian duty for all times. It was the power in Christ's life, and the strong element in John, which draws with irresistible force every reader of the pages he has written. This is the new commandment, and also the old, that "ye love one another." A belief had circulated among the disciples and others, based on a wrong apprehension of Christ's words, that John would not die. Tradition points out his grave at Ephesus in the Church of St. John. An early legend, founded on the belief that he was not to die until Christ returned, stated that the earth that covered his body had been seen to move, as he lay asleep, not dead, in the tomb. It is uncertain whether he wrote the Apocalypse in Patmos or Ephesus. Some are of opinion that both the Gospel and the Book of Revelation were written in Ephesus. What matters it? The man lived there and taught the divine and eternal truth he had heard from the lips of the Son of God. His influence, as the last man who could say, "I have beheld the glory of the only begotten of the Father," must have been far-reaching. His authority as an apostle, his untiring zeal, his gentle nature must have given

him a potent sway over the Church for good, and doubtless helped him to win the heathen to Christ.

In the harbour of Ephesus in those times might have been seen the merchant ships of all nations. Her streets were thronged with pilgrims, merchants and wise men from Asia, and the islands of the sea, from Palestine and from remote parts of the Roman Empire. Some were seeking gain or pleasure, others, by sacrifices, the favour of the renowned goddess. In that throng, amid such scenes, Paul and John were quietly and faithfully sowing the seed of God's truth. By degrees the light penetrated the heathen darkness, the people saw their folly, burned their books by which they practised magic, and the word of God grew mightily. With such men to lay the foundation of Christianity and to build on it, it was to be expected that Christ would commend the Church of Ephesus: "I know thy works and thy labour, and thy patience."* But warning her, he said, "thou hast left thy first love." As sand and rubbish have filled up the harbour of Ephesus, and earthquakes and devastating wars have destroyed that fair city, and laid her glory in the dust, so error, superstition, and Mahommedanism have buried Christianity. The candlestick has been removed out of its place. But as the pillars of the ancient edifices have been transported to support the dome and roof of St. Sophia in Constantinople, so will the witness and words of St. John continue to be strong and durable pillars to support the glorious temple of God's truth over the whole world. He is dead, but his life and testimony will be living forces in the kingdom of God unto the end of the age.

From Smyrna to Constantinople the route is among islands and near places on the mainland, famous in Grecian mythology and history. The ship cast anchor in the harbour

* Rev. ii. 2, 4.

of Mytilene at sunset. This is the ancient Lesbos, the birth-place of Sappho and other poets, historians and philosophers. The modern town of Mytilene is situated along the base of the hill which follows the coast line at a short distance from the shore. The town contains a population of about ten thousand ; its chief exports are wine, olives, olive oil and figs. As we sailed out of the harbour, the lights from the windows and the streets cast their rays out on the gentle ripples that moved over the surface of the sea. In a few moments the lights were out of sight and we left Mytilene behind with its ancient glory and modern Greeks.

On our left we passed Tenedos, near the entrance to the Dardanelles. To this island the wily Greeks retreated when they pretended to abandon the siege of Troy and finally, by the stratagem of the wooden horse, entered Troy and captured the city. The island seemed destitute of trees and shrubs. In parts of it the vine grows well and wine is the chief export. Shortly after leaving Tenedos on the level plain of Troas the mound of ancient Troy came in sight. Through my glass the mound was quite distinct and had the appearance of a pyramid. On that plain watered by the Scamander and Samoeis, marvellous feats of valour were done by Grecian and Trojan heroes. Dr. Schliemann has sunk numerous pits over the plain of Troy, and at length his indefatigable labours have been rewarded by the discovery of ancient Ilium, the capital of Priam, and the theme of the most famous epic poem in the Greek language. Near the northern end of the plain rises the mound, known as Kissarlik, "the fortress hill," to the height of about one hundred and sixty feet above the sea. In this mound he has dug and found golden treasures, ear-rings, bracelets and necklaces, which may have been worn by Adromache and her maids, besides golden vessels, one of these being a goblet nearly three pounds in weight. Many of these are to be seen in the

museum, in Constantinople and Athens. To Dr. Schliemann belongs the honour of having verified the facts of Homer in regard to the existence of Troy, and fixed its site at Kissarlik, which may have been the ancient Pergamos, or the acropolis around whose base the city was at first situated.

The scenery on both sides of the Dardanelles is tame and uninteresting. Extensive tracts of country are thinly populated, and the soil poorly cultivated. Turkish fortifications line both shores, which, if well manned with brave soldiers and powerful guns, would make these waters impassable to the strongest iron-clads. Though the scenery was monotonous we passed in rapid succession places renowned in the annals of ancient and modern times. Here, at a narrow part of the channel Xerxes in 480, B.C., had united Asia and Europe by a bridge of boats, over which the Persian soldiers crossed to subdue Greece and all Europe. Here, too, Leander swam from shore to shore, whose feat Byron also successfully imitated, and which he celebrates in song:

If in the month of dark December,
Leander, who was nightly wont,
What maid will not the tale remember !
To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont.

For me, degenerate modern wretch,
Though in the genial month of May
My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
And think I've done a feat to-day.

A brief stay was made at Gallipoli, situated on the face of a hill which gently slopes to the shores of the Dardanelles. The dock was crowded with citizens who had come from curiosity to gaze on the strange faces of the passengers. Hundreds of young Turks were rowing round the ship in their graceful caiques, singing monotonous, humdrum songs. The town itself seemed deserted, not a soul could be seen in the

streets. The live part of the population was down at the dock and the remainder were probably taking their siesta under the fragrant shrubs or shady trees of their gardens.

On entering the sea of Marmora, thick black clouds overcast the sky, a stiff breeze blew, and the choppy waves gave the ship a motion that made some of us feel uncomfortable. A storm soon began to rage inside the ship, as well as outside. A haughty, impetuous Italian had become involved in trouble with a fierce Turk. The Turk's eyes flashed with hatred for the infidel dog of an Italian. He was soon supported by half a dozen companions who threatened to send the Italian to the place in the next world, where he would be in his congenial element and give no trouble to good Mahommedans, who are never seen there. The Italian, nothing daunted, promised to slay the Turks and give their bodies for food to the dogs in Constantinople. Neither of these direful threats, however, were carried out. An appeal was made to the Italian captain of the ship, who returned from a long and exciting interview with the opposing warriors, saying, "they are beasts." It was uncertain whether this was meant to apply to the Italian or Turks, or to all of them. However, the battle ceased on shipboard without blood or violent death.

Early in the day we passed the ancient walls of Stamboul, and after turning Seraglio Point this city of splendid mosques and magnificent palaces burst on my view. In the harbour, the Golden Horn, named according to Strabo, from its resemblance to a stag's horn, were lying at anchor ships from every civilized nation. A violent rain-storm raged. While waiting for a lull in the storm I attempted to get the topography of the city fixed in my mind. Galata and Pera are on the European shore; the former quarter is connected by bridge with the ancient city; and a few miles along the Asiatic coast Scutari could be seen embowered amid masses of shrubs and stately

trees. As there seemed little prospect of the rain ceasing, I landed, and climbed the roughly paved streets of Galata to the European quarter. The filthy water was pouring down the narrow streets towards the harbour. Multitudes of ill-favoured dogs were lying against the walls of the houses and at the entrance to the narrow lanes. The city seemed deserted, and a strange silence reigned in this great centre of oriental wealth and depotism. There were no heavily laden carts, with broad tires, rattling over the stone-paved streets, such as are seen in Britain and Canada. And one misses even the Jehus of Italy and France who make the streets lively with the cracking of their whips and their torrents of impudence. There are not even donkey-boys, whose politeness, perseverance, and demands for bukshish become familiar. Constantinople is a mongrel city, neither Oriental nor European. Men of all nations may be seen in the streets as well as the proud and fanatical Turk. Houses of European and Oriental style stand side by side like devoted friends. Mosques and Christian churches are seen, in the one of which Mahommed and the Koran are heard, in the other, Christ and the Scriptures. Dress, language, customs, belief are all intermingled, so that Constantinople is not a typical city of the east like Cairo, in Egypt.

The present city was founded in A.D. 330 by Constantine on the foundations of the ancient Byzantium. He made it the capital of the Eastern Empire, and modelled it after Rome, the capital of the west. It was built on seven hills, was divided into fourteen regions, and its walls were thirteen miles in circumference. The Emperor joined in the ceremonies of founding the city. With a lance in his hand he led the procession and marked the boundaries of the new city. Some of his officers spoke of its unusual magnitude, to whom the Emperor replied, "I shall still advance, till He, the invisible guide, who marches before me, thinks proper to stop." The

Emperor once had designed to found his city on the plain to the south of Troy, near Rhætium, where the brave Ajax had fallen. No more favoured spot than that on which Constantinople stands could exist for beauty of situation, salubrious climate, the accumulation of wealth, and safety against attack. In its gardens are flowers of richest hue, and fragrant shrubs, and trees laden with luscious fruit. The Bosphorus and the Dardanelles are two gateways through which come the produce, the treasures, and people from the four quarters of the globe. Through these highways have come the riches of every nation into the Golden Horn. A part of the ancient walls are yet standing, together with the aqueducts, and colonnades, which Constantine built at a cost of over twelve million dollars. The works of genius were brought from distant countries to adorn the city; all that ambition, wealth, and power could command were employed in building and embellishing it. On the site of the old city was the Forum, the only monument of which, that has survived the ravages of time and war is the burnt pillar. It is a part of a lofty column that stood in the centre of the Forum. Originally it was a hundred and twenty feet high and supported a statue of Apollo, as the sun god, holding a sceptre in his right hand, and a globe in his left. Not far from this spot is the Atmeidan, the old hippodrome. The site is marked by the twisted pillar of brass, in the form of three serpents. Their heads once supported a golden tripod taken from the temple of Delphi, where it had been dedicated to the god by the victorious Greeks after the defeat of the Persians. When Mahommed the Second captured Constantinople in 1453, he rode through the city admiring its palaces, churches, and monuments. In passing through the hippodrome, he saw the triple-headed pillar, and in his ignorance, believing the three serpents were the gods of the infidel Christians, he swung his battle axe and shattered

the head of one of the serpents. What he left has been defaced since by the same fanaticism, and only the headless trunks remain of a once splendid work of ancient art.

Constantinople is a city of splendid mosques. St. Sophia possesses supreme interest because of its origin and antiquity. Originally a Christian church it was built by Justinian in 538 A.D. It is in the form of a Greek cross two hundred and seventy feet long, and two hundred and forty-three broad, and surrounded by a dome one hundred and eighty feet high. In the latter part of May, 1453, St. Sophia was the scene of terrible carnage. Deeds of terrible brutality were done under that great dome, and near the very altar. From all parts of the city thousands fled for safety to the church. It was crowded to its utmost capacity, and the strong doors were barred against the victorious Mahommedans, who with their battle-axes, however, soon forced an entrance. The captives were bound with cords together and driven through the streets, and about sixty thousand of them sold as slaves throughout the empire. On one of the pillars is shown the hand mark of Mahommed, about twenty feet above the floor. It is pointed to with pride by the Turks, as showing the depth of dead infidel bodies over which he rode. Gold, silver, jewels and ornaments were plundered. Images were torn down from the niches and the altar. Scriptural scenes, in mosaic or frescoing on the walls, were mutilated or painted over. Everything connected with the Christian religion was defaced or removed. In the church are twelve columns of great beauty from the temple of Diana at Ephesus. Others are supposed to have been brought from Baalbek, from Heliopolis, in Egypt, and from Athens. Thus Europe, Asia and Egypt had given up their treasures to adorn the house of the Lord. On the west side, above the windows, the figure of our Lord is yet plainly seen through the thin coating of paint. Crosses are seen in many

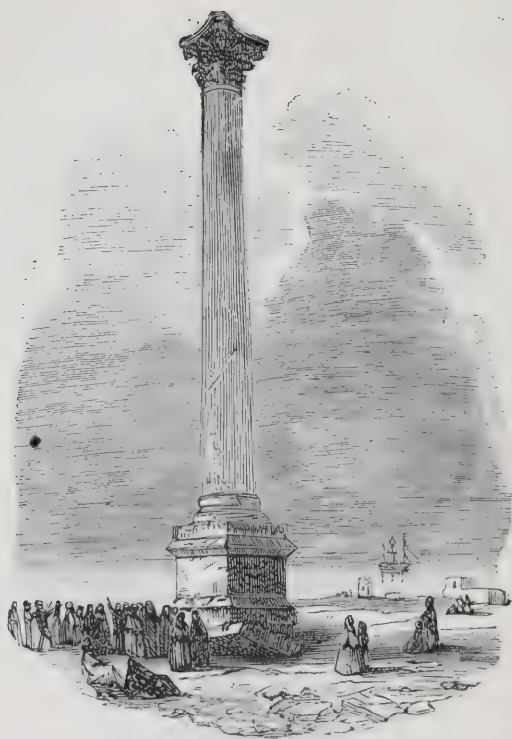
parts of the building, on the walls, columns, and floor. The crosses carved in the marble have been only roughly obliterated. Round the interior and lower part of the dome was the figure of the Father, now entirely covered by a green coating of paint on which are extracts from the koran. On the four lower corners are four angels with outstretched wings, perhaps copies of the symbolic figures in Ezekiel's prophecy. The heads have been obliterated and gilded pieces of wood in the form of a star put in their places. Thus the monstrosity is formed, of a golden star with extended wings. At the entrance of the mosque is a square pillar covered with brass, through which there is a small opening, into which the ignorant people afflicted with various diseases thrust their handkerchiefs. This marble column is supposed to possess some miraculous power of healing. In one corner of this massive and splendid edifice a man and a lad were repeating the Koran, swaying their bodies backward and forward. Only a few are seen in the mosque, except on special occasions. It is of more value to the Sultan and the ecclesiastical authorities as a source of revenue from travellers, than a place of devotion for pious Mahommedans. The streets of Constantinople are narrow and winding. They have a gloomy appearance, from the absence of windows facing the street. The quietness that pervades the city during the day is intensified after sundown. The stillness of the night is broken only by the watchmen, who go over their beats, carrying a staff, shod with iron. This they strike on the stone pavement at regular intervals, and the hollow sound is heard for a considerable distance in the narrow, quiet streets. What the philosophy of this hard beating is, I could not discover. Its object may have been threefold, to warn robbers to keep quiet until the faithful guardians of the city passed by, or to give them warning in time that they might escape, or to keep strangers awake and make them sympathize with the

unfortunate Turks whose onerous duty forbids them sleeping in the night.

Sad sights meet one even in the most favoured lands on earth. Sin and death follow humanity everywhere. Over the calm waters of the Golden Horn, the corpse of a poor woman was being rowed to its resting place. One man rowed the boat, another steered, between them lay the dead body clad in the common every day gown which she had worn. Her relatives and friends preceded the corpse, in two boats. The scene was sad enough. Thousands were rowing on the same water in all the activity of life. She had left her cares, her joys and her beautiful city forever. As they lifted her out of the boat and laid her in the grave, one could not help feeling that no ray of light, no word of comfort, no solid hope could have cheered her soul in the valley of death. Up the Bosphorus, on the European shore, are the splendid palaces of the Sultans, scenes of crime and terrible murder. Far up on the elevated brow of the hill, is the palace of the present Sultan, surrounded by strong walls, and guarded by faithful soldiers. Near the water is the mosque to which he comes every Friday to pray, attended by eight or ten thousand soldiers, conspicuous among whom is his trusty Nubian regiment. Beyond is Robert's College, a handsome building, with mansard roof, and square balconies at each of its four corners. It is a centre of light, amid Greek ignorance and Mahomedan bigotry, that will diffuse the knowledge of the Lord Jesus among the multitudes that know not Christ and His salvation. On the Asiatic shore is Scutari, where the American Presbyterian missionaries reside, some of whom have spent many years in Greece and in Constantinople, whose labours have been abundant and whose success has been great. There also are the boys' and girls' schools, supported by generous Christian ladies in the United States. The scenery along the shores of the Bosphorus is

perhaps unsurpassed for beauty in the world. The hills are clad with a great variety of trees and shrubs. Gently sloping valleys stretch inland from the water, and costly residences of ambassadors, princes, and wealthy merchants, are seen in picturesque situations. The climate is mild. The heat of summer is moderated by the breezes from the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmora. The situation is that of an earthly paradise. The people are, however, lazy, and morally debased. The government is bad. God has done everything for the Turks: they do almost nothing for themselves. The power that will give life and the means of progress to Constantinople is the same which is needed through all the Orient, the Gospel in the heart and life of the rulers and people. When the Cross instead of the Crescent shall become the symbol of the people's religious faith, righteousness and peace, like a golden chain, will link Asia and Europe to the throne of God. Then, a long step will have been taken towards the fulfilment of the purpose and the prophecy of God: "Christ will have the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession."





POMPEY'S PILLAR.

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